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Third Edition.

AN

ADDRESS

TO THE

Merchants, Manufacturers, and Landed Proprietors

OF

IRELAND.

IN WHICH

THE INFLUENCE OF AN UNION

ON THEIR

RESPECTIVE PURSUITS IS EXAMINED.

AND IN WHICH

THE REAL RECIPROCAL INTERESTS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND ARE CANDIDLY AND IMPARTIALLY DISCUSSED.

BY *NICHOLAS PHILPOT LEADER*, ESQ.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THOSE who cannot be convinced of any thing by argument, will ſneer at my officious and impertinent zeal in obtruding myſelf on the attention of the public. But if by looking at my country boldly in the face, at all its intereſts and all its dangers, I can prevent one honeſt legiſlator wavering from the line of virtuous duty, the reflection of contributing, even in a ſmall degree, to the preſervation and the comforts of the induſtrious part of the community, will amply compenſate for what I have the vanity to hope the reader will not find trite and common-placed obſervations.

TO THE

Merchants and Country Gentlemen.

GENTLEMEN,

To agitate the public mind by inflammatory invective, or carry into public or private life a fretful and vindictive acrimony towards thoſe who happen to be in power, would be at all times, but more particularly at the preſent, repugnant to my natural diſpoſition, and my love for the greateſt of all earthly bleſſings, domeſtic peace and national ſecurity.—However from the unbending zeal and unceaſing perſeverance, with which the ſervants of the crown have endeavoured to reſtore a tried, convicted and condemned delinquent to the confidence of their fellow ſubjects, it is moſt evident that they can foreſee neither inconvenience to themſelves, nor danger to

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their country, from the cloſeſt inveſtigation of the principles by which they may be ſuppoſed to be actuated, or the means which they have uſed to effect ſo deſirable an object. The ſupporters of the Union have at leaſt one merit, in which they certainly have a conſpicuous advantage over all their opponents, in their unwearied exertions to recruit their levies—their eagerneſs to defend and to propagate their principles—and in their attempts to demonſtrate their ſincerity if not by the ſoundneſs of their cauſe, at leaſt by ſhewing the world that in their endeavours to carry their favourite meaſure into execution, they were neither deficient in courage nor conſiſtency.

All circumſtances taken together, the infatuation of the executive governments of both countries towards Ireland is the moſt ſingular and extravagant—had there been a change in his Majeſty's councils, and had the new men on whom he was pleaſed to repoſe his confidence, projected the renovation or the new conſtruction of the common wealth—though there are many amongſt you who might poſſibly have trembled at their boldneſs, there is not one at leaſt who could have been ſurprized at their inconſiſtency. But alas! how ſtrangely have theſe miniſters perverted in themſelves and in thoſe who attend to them, all the amiable and honourable characteriſtics of the human heart—have they not for theſe laſt ten years been in a ſtate of permanent inſurrection againſt

againſt every man who profeſſed a ſpeculative opinion or hazarded a ſentiment in favor of the ſlighteſt innovation!—and how have the events of the day appeared to demonſtrate the propriety of the conduct which they have purſued—have they not broken the moſt endearing friendſhips to wage eternal war againſt ſpeculative projects?—Have they not obtained accumulated honors, and the moſt lucrative employments in both countries, for their ſuppoſed abhorrence of all kinds of innovation?—And have they not ſecured the confidence both of ſovereign and of ſubject, for their holy and pious zeal to demonſtrate, that a ſingle departure from the wiſdom of our anceſtors would lead to the annihilation of all regular government, and that out of the deſtruction of eſtabliſhed inſtitution—thoſe Theban and Thracian orgies acted with ſo much ſucceſs in another country were ſure to ariſe—theſe were the advantages which they obtained—and theſe the principles which they uniformly profeſſed. That theſe men ſhould on a ſudden become principal performers in the ſcene repreſenting before us, muſt fill the enlightened and benevolent mind with the moſt afflicting ſenſations, and furniſh a complete triumph to thoſe who might otherwiſe be ſuppoſed to inſult them without cauſe, or cenſure them without proof.—When you, the induſtrious and independent part of the community, who feel and have felt the actual arrangement of the ſtate

to be of the greateſt poſſible eſtimation, obſerve this conduct in the ſuppoſed ſupporters of the eſtabliſhed order of your own country, and contemplate the frantic freaks and the odious diſregard of the intereſts of the human ſpecies, on the part of thoſe in another country who have aſpired to be claſſed among the beneſactors of mankind—you ſeem to me to have no other alternative than to uphold, if you can uphold, the Conſtitution of our fathers, if not, to ſeclude yourſelves from a world of vice, wickedneſs and confuſion, the victims of an uſeleſs lamentation and unavailing ſorrow.

Indeed the queſtion, Union or no Union, is an awful and intereſting one to every Iriſhman, or there is none awful and intereſting at this ſide of the grave. It is better, therefore, to be condemned for too tremulous zeal, than to be ruined by too confident ſecurity. The relative intereſts of nations widely differ from the ſquabbling politics of parties, and it would ill become us to be indolent and lazy in the care of them, or from a nobleneſs of mind and frankneſs of character, to wave all unworthy ſuſpicions. If the ſafety of the ſtate is at ſtake, we cannot exceed in foreſight or precaution; and as our conduct on ſuch occaſions ought to be influenced by arguments alone, drawn from truth and reaſon, ſo theſe arguments ought to be examined in proportion to the importance of the ſubject. When we fairly

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and honeſtly conceive an injury is intended, our duty to oppoſe it, to uſe a geometrical expreſſion, ſhould be in a compound ratio of the degree of appearance, and the greatneſs of the evil which is threatened. What renders the re-introduction of this meaſure peculiarly calamitous is, that the very beſt men in the country are afraid, in the preſent cruel and critical ſituation of affairs, to diſcuſs it fairly and frankly, even in the boſom of their private families. It is very evident, however, that there can be no cauſe for this extreme prudence; for you muſt either ſuppoſe, what you will not willingly credit, that the deliberations and the actions of your rulers are founded on a ſtrange compound of crimes and follies, or elſe you muſt conclude, that though you are engaged in a moſt eventful war, and ſcarce eſcaped from the horrors of civil conflict, yet that no increaſed danger, no poſſible interruption to national tranquillity, can ariſe from diſcuſſing, nay even from carrying the meaſure into complete execution. The queſtion between us is ſimply this—Are we to have a country which we can call our own, in which we can depoſit our own hopes, as well as thoſe of our poſterity, without being expoſed to muffled conſpiracy and eternal war, and are we, without any opportunity of improving our condition, retrieving our misfortunes, recruiting our finances, perpetuating our polity, and affecting the regeneration of

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our common country, on principles ſtrictly conſtitutional, if our rulers throw aſide the grimace of hypocriſy, and aſſume the attributes and character of ſtateſmen. The queſtion is not, whether there are abuſes in the ſtate; but the queſtion is, are we to have at a ſtate all? The queſtion is not, whether thoſe in power are virtuous and wiſe, but the queſtion is, whether we are to have an opportunity of calling virtue and wiſdom to our aid, in other times and in a more favoured opportunity? And if, in the words of an eloquent writer, commerce and the arts are to be ſacrificed in the experiment, to try how a country may ſtand by the ſubverſion of eſtabliſhed inſtitutions, what ſort of a thing muſt a nation be, of groſs, ſtupid, ferocious, and at the ſame time, poor and ſordid barbarians, deſtitute of honour and manly pride, poſſeſſing nothing at preſent, and hoping for nothing hereafter.

Say or think what they will, theſe rulers cannot ſeparate their fortunes from our own. If they are the promoters of great national misfortunes, they and their children will in the courſe of nature and of time, be involved in the conſequences which thoſe calamities may occaſion. It can be of little uſe to obtain power and emolument by the ſale of national honour and individual character, if they cannot include a ſecure and quiet enjoyment to themſelves and their poſterity of the purchaſe they have made. To ſecure their hereditary

ditary patrimony and the earnings of their individual induſtry by wiſdom and by virtue, is far preferable than to graſp at any honors which the crown can confer, or the wealth which the treaſury can beſtow, and hold them with a troubled conſcience and the tenure of the ſword. The rumour of the day certainly is, that an Union is to be carried at all events and under all inconveniences, but as I cannot readily accede to every vulgar report, ſo I muſt be excuſed for conceiving it poſſible that any meaſure could be paſſed againſt the councils of the wiſe, the arguments of the moderate and the intreaties of the humane—it is therefore that I think it of the laſt importance to ſhew, that every freſh occurrence abroad and at home, ſince the queſtion was laſt diſcuſſed, affords the ſtrongeſt arguments againſt the project, and that there is not the ſmalleſt ground for changing the opinion which we gave at the commencement of the former year, that an Union was calculated to ſtrike a fatal blow againſt the property and the perſons of all the various inhabitants of this great and proſperous town, and of conſequence to have a baneful and deadly influence on the whole community. For of all the propoſitions which have ever been attempted to be maintained that which is intended to demonſtrate—that a meaſure which is calculated to injure a great and proſperous metropolis, and which whilſt it is operating that injury, is inſenſibly contracting the

means

means by which great cities may be raiſed—can be diſadvantageous to the particular member, without being diſadvantageous alſo to the community at large, ſeems to me the moſt monſtrous that ever was impoſed on the credulity of the moſt diſtempered imagination.

On principles of political œconomy, that Dublin, in common with the reſt of Ireland, muſt be injured

That the intereſt of the City of Dublin ſhould ever be abſtracted from the general intereſt of Ireland, is to me as extraordinary as that any honeſt reflecting Iriſhman could ever be induced to applaud the wiſdom of the meaſure. It has been ſtrongly relied on in various publications, that the partial evil to Dublin by an Union, will be fully compenſated by the general good. The firſt ſubject for argument now is, that a Union is not only calculated to depreſs this city; but that it is calculated to depreſs and prevent the exaltation of any other part of the nation to the extent it might otherwiſe be advanced—a great metropolis inſtead of being the effect may be conſidered to be the cauſe of the improvement and cultivation of the country. There are ſome countries more than others in which (from exiſting circumſtances ariſing out of ancient inſtitutions or inveterate habits,) it is peculiarly neceſſary to avoid any experiment which might impede the growth of their great cities—and of all the countries in Europe, Ireland is that country which ought to be moſt cautious. It is to be remembered that even under the exiſting connexion there is a calamitous propenſity

penſity in our great proprietors to emigrate to England; and until it can be ſhewn that the unavoidable abſence of three or four hundred of the firſt families and fortunes in Ireland muſt neceſſarily diminiſh the evil, I have a right to aſſume that an Union is not only calculated to create but to encourage emigration. Great proprietors never are conſtant reſidents in the country parts of any nation, and very rarely, great cultivators. There is no proportion in Ireland between the great proprietors and thoſe of moderate fortunes. We have not the means of aſcertaining the preciſe proportion; but that an immenſe proportion of the landed property of the country is in the hands of great proprietors is univerſally allowed —if the landed property of Ireland was generally diffuſed among ſmall proprietors or men of middling condition, the preſent argument would looſe conſiderably in its weight: for ſmall proprietors who know every part of their territory view it with all the affection which property naturally inſpires, they cannot be allured to abandon the cheering and invigorating induſtry of the country for the ſloth and lazineſs of towns— they are of all improvers the moſt intelligent, the moſt induſtrious and the moſt ſucceſsful, and the moſt likely to veſt the rents ariſing out of their fully improved lands in ſome branches of manufactures. But great proprietors from their education and their habits, are rarely addicted to

great induſtry. Their motive is to make their lives pleaſant without caring to make them uſeful. They have no bounds to expence, becauſe they have no bounds to their vanity, or the value they ſet upon their comforts or their luxuries: they cannot live out of large and populous cities, becauſe theſe cities are the ſeat of poliſhed ſociety—the nature of men is intricate and the objects of ſociety of the greateſt poſſible complexity. If in the infirmity of that nature we often convert the moſt imaginary evils into inſuperable calamities; are we to entertain no apprehenſions from real evils themſelves? That many great proprietors by reſiding in another nation ſhew that they cannot enjoy the pleaſure of poliſhed ſociety in their own, is a ſufficient misfortune—ſhall we then adopt a meaſure particularly calculated to encreaſe the number of abſentees, as well as to render thoſe diſpoſed to remain diſguſted and diſcontented with their country—is it ſeriouſly to be contended that the abſolute unavoidable neceſſity of tranſporting three or four hundred perſons of the greateſt fortunes and not the leaſt cultivated manners, will not narrow the ſphere of poliſhed ſociety, or ſhall it be aſſerted that ſuch a tranſportation is not likely to make their old intimates of equal fortunes conceive at leaſt they have ſuſtained a loſs, and encourage perſons who might not otherwiſe form an idea of the kind, to imagine that thoſe who have abandoned Dublin have found

found in London a more pleaſant and agreeable ſociety? Here then we leave the individuals ſent to tranſact the buſineſs of the nation and the money they draw for their ſupport out of the queſtion. Is there no danger to be apprehended from folly, from faſhion, from ignorance, from example on minds reſtrained by no tie and preſcribed by no regulation? Is it to be gravely contended, that the different modes of thinking prevalent amongſt men, the infinite and obſcure combination of their ideas which often originate in principles falſe in themſelves, but dear to them who adopt them, are to have no influence in unnerving the arm of the ſpeculatiſt—ſhall it be ſaid that new inſtitutions are not likely to create new prejudices; or is it gravely to be maintained that when a provincial dependency is ſubſtituted for national government, that the ties and principles which bind us to our country, and which are ſo interwoven with long habits of thinking ourſelves at leaſt a ſeparate and independent people, that the one cannot be deſtroyed without the complete deſtruction of the other, will not not neceſſarily be torn up and eradicated from the human heart!

Is it then prudent to give the great proprietors of Ireland cauſe for feeling and perceiving that they have not the advantage of poliſhed ſociety to the extent they had before the Union? Nay, is

it wiſe, by every years experience, to ſhew them that the ſtate of ſociety in Ireland is growing worſe and worſe. To oppoſe the meaſure, in mercy to this claſs of our countrymen, would be to take a confined and narrow view of the queſtion. Thoſe who would take the trouble to number the great proprietors who conſtantly or occaſionally reſide in Dublin, who would count the number of hands which are employed in adminiſtering to their wants and ſupplying them with luxuries or comforts, ſo as to eſtimate the numbers who may be thrown out of employment by by theſe proprietors changing their reſidence to England, thoſe who can eſtimate the reaction of theſe ills, occaſioned by the depreſſion of this town on the country, by which its inhabitants are ſupplied with the means of ſubſiſtence, can alone properly eſtimate the miſery and miſchief which muſt be occaſioned by this meaſure. To take any individual of large fortune, and enumerate his dependents, and then calculate the various means by which various individuals derive their ſubſiſtence through him, is a familiar illuſtration of this argument; but the evils from the abſence of a number of theſe individuals on the great mauufacturing houſes, are not eaſily or readily perceived. All the dependant branches fall with the ſupporting trunk. The drain of the capital of theſe proprietors will try the bone

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and ſearch the marrow of every manufacturer, whoſe misfortunes will recoil on a large portion of the labouring claſs of the community ; for as the calamity deſcends through the ſubordinate claſs, the victims will become more numerous, though leſs diſtinguiſhed, until the whole community ſinks unde the preſſure of thoſe inevitable misfortunes.

A rebellion madly commenced, and a war raſhly undertaken, may have occaſioned great temporary inconveniences : but a train of fortunate occurrences may reſtore complete peace, and and the victory of a day may compenſate the defeat of years. For inſtance, Sparta, which was ſo often harraſſed by the arms of neighbouring powers, was always ſeen to riſe more formidable from oppreſſion, and the celebrated defeat of Cannæ, only inſpired the Romans with greater courage. But the ſlighteſt errors in civil polity, are capable of producing the moſt deſtructive and permanent evils. Slighter cauſes than the revolution in their governments have occaſioned the downfall of cities and the ruin of ſtates. How the morals of the people can be ameliorated, and their manners improved, by depriving them of an intercourſe with the higher orders of the ſtate ; how the domeſtic trade of a nation can be encreaſed by ſending its greateſt and richeſt conſumers to a diſtant country, and how a nation at

large

large can be enriched by remitting its wealth to ſupport the number ſhe has made it neceſſary to emigrate—are yet to be proved? No, no, depend upon it that in political economy, the metropolis of a country, is to the country at large—what in the admirable economy of human life, the heart is to the reſt of the human ſyſtem. That as the latter by its alternate contraction and dilation and by being that part of the ſyſtem from whence all the arteries ariſe, and in which all the veins terminate, is the chief inſtrument of the circulation of the blood and the principle of life—ſo the former by preſenting a ready market the moſt improved produce of every kind in the nation, and by returning in exchange the moſt improved manufactures, gives life, energy and motion to the whole community.

It is not very difficult to foreſee the objections which may be made by thoſe who may be unwilling to acknowledge the truths which are here attempted to be enforced—they will firſt contend that the argument drawn from emigration is founded on aſſertion and therefore ought to fall to the ground—you are the jurors impannelled to find the verdict. Secondly, though for the purpoſe of argument they will admit the fact of encreaſed emigration, yet they will contend that Dublin might be injured and the reſt of the country might be ſerved; and that if there are emigrants of one kind from Ireland, there will be

others of a different kind from England, and that the great increaſe of manufactures and the tranſportation of capitals will more than ſuperabundantly counteract the miſchief reſulting out of the remittance of the rents of land. This is the language holden by ſome of the merchants of Ireland. What ſay they, are your great proprietors to us: with expences greater than their incomes, how often do they ruin the tradeſmen whom they ſhould cheriſh. In their reſpective eſtates, theſe proprietors do no good: in the capital they do much miſchief—and it is thus that thoſe who are under the deluſion of the ſpring and elaſticity to be derived from an Union to commercial intercourſe are enraptured with the ideas of exchanging the great and inactive for the merchant and the induſtrious. It is a very common mode of arguing this queſtion to write hiſtories on the caprice of commerce, and the ſearching eye which ſhe has for an advantageous ſituation—it is ſaid that Briſtol has declined in trade and that Liverpool has raiſed itſelf on the ruins of Briſtol, without the ſlighteſt inconvenience to England: and that therefore the trade of Dublin might be removed to Cork without any injury whatever to Ireland. But as it cannot be ſhewn that the decline of Briſtol was occaſioned by great operating cauſes of national ruin, there is no analogy whatever between the two caſes. But how is Cork to be exalted in a far greater proportion than Dublin is depreſſed

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That Cork cannot be benefited by Union.

—one would imagine from the noiſe made in the world of the great advantage of the meaſure to Cork, that there was ſome incomprehenſible ſpell by which the produce of theſe iſlands might be inſtantaneouſly rolled to Eaſt and Weſt, and by the means of which the great articles of the commerce of theſe countries might be conveniently lodged in the ſtores of the merchants of London? Indeed I do not recollect among the promiſed advantages to Cork, that a portion of the trade to the Eaſt has been included: though the Directors of the Eaſt India Company have ſpent millions in making the port and city of London the depot of Eaſt India produce, though London is admirably calculated for re-exporting the produce of both Eaſt and Weſt Indies to the continent and Northern parts of Europe, and is ſpecifically mentioned in the lately renewed charter as the only port for the trade to the Eaſt—yet it is ſomewhat ſingular indeed that the advantage of that trade is not mentioued among the other benefits which Cork is to derive from this meaſure. Then we come to the trade to the Weſt Indies: in this Cork is to carry every thing before it. But how is the trade to the Weſt Indies carried on at preſent? The merchant of Cork receives the contract for proviſions, he executes that contract: and whatever profit he makes, is an increaſe to his capital, and is afterwards employed in extending his mercantile purſuits. The money he gives for

thoſe

thoſe proviſions, and his own profit, center in the country; but let us have the Union, and what will be our boaſted advantages. A partner or a clerk in an Engliſh houſe will be ſent over to buy the proviſions himſelf, cure them and ſhip them, ſet off at the end of the ſeaſon, and thus deprive the regular merchant and the country of the fair profit which now remains in it after the contract is executed.

But ſay the advocates for the Union, that is a moſt wretched mode of conſidering the buſineſs. It is the capital which will be tranſported that will effect ſuch miracles at Cork. I do not feel pleaſant in troubling you with that very trite argument of Mr. Pitt's, that let the ſituation of Ireland be ever ſo much more convenient for an intercourſe with the Weſt Indies, yet certainly that a circuitous navigation through the Iriſh ports to England, could by no means be ſo beneficial as a direct navigation to the Engliſh ports; nor could the direct navigation to England be performed to greater advantage by the Iriſh than the Engliſh merchants; and even if it could, the direct navigation is at this hour in the power of the Iriſh. But it may be ſaid, that although true it is that Cork might not be an emporium for England, yet ſhe may be a depot from whence the Britiſh merchant may ſupply his other markets. Is ſuch nonſenſe to be tolerated, as that every Engliſh ſhip which is to ſail for the Baltic or the Levant,

and whoſe cargo is compoſed of innumerable commodities, muſt come round to Cork to take in Weſt India produce. O! but ſtill great capital is to go to Cork to be put into the trade to the Weſt Indies. Are we to cloſe our eyes and remain totally ignorant of the occurrences of the world. During the war it is poſſible that we may almoſt conſider this trade a monopoly. But the Union is to be permanent, the war only temporary. Even in war we have found that the French, through the medium of neutral bottoms, have been able to ſend in a large ſupply of ſugar to Hamburgh, and diſturb very much the ſale of Britiſh Weſt India produce on the continent.—But I think it ſtands allowed on all hands, that our trade to the Weſt Indies muſt conſiderably diminiſh every hour from the time peace is concluded. The very valuable and fertile iſland of St. Domingo will give the French not only enough to ſupply their own wants, but to vie with us in the different markets of the world. If the trade to the Weſt Indies could be encreaſed by our encreaſing the number of our Weſt India iſlands, we might draw ſome conſolation from our acquiſitions during the preſent war. But what avail our captures when a conſiderable part of Jamaica that might be cultivated, has never yet been turned to advantage. The great difficulty of carriage renders it impoſſible to make ſugars or rum at a greater diſtance from the ſea than ten or

twelve

twelve miles. None of our iſlands have great rivers running through them on whoſe banks thoſe commodities might be produced. Light articles may be brought from the remoteſt parts, but thoſe heavy articles muſt be cultivated near the ſea coaſt. The want of thoſe rivers deprives the planters of theſe mills which are of the greateſt advantage in the cultivation of the cains, and for which windmills, cattle mills, &c. are a precarious and moſt expenſive ſubſtitute. But in St. Domingo there are large rivers which render this iſland moſt valuable indeed. It can have its banks cultivated: it can ſend its produce down theſe rivers for exportation, and it is therefore that we have reaſon to apprehend, that in time of peace, the French will engroſs a large portion of that trade, of which at preſent we certainly have a ſpecies of monopoly. The wants of mankind are limited. Beſides, if all the accounts from Egypt are not extremely exaggerated, it is ſurely not impoſſible but that it might ſupply the eaſtern part of Europe with many articles ſimilar to thoſe of the Weſt India produce. It is to be remembered, that the trade of the world is forced at preſent from its natural channel. By having the dominion of the ſeas, we have a great comparative advantage over our enemies. But in peace the trade of the world muſt deſcend to its proper level; and as the Engliſh merchant can now, when his trade to the Weſt Indies is poſſibly at its greateſt height, carry it

on without ever caſting his eyes on Cork; it is ſcarce probable that he would diſcover this want of ſituation, when his trade was in a ſtate of diminution. For unleſs we can imagine the French iſlands, when peace arrives, what they never were before, worſe governed than the Engliſh colonies, and unleſs we can entertain the idea, that France herſelf is not well ſituated for foreign commerce, and taxed far beyond England, we muſt neceſſarily admit that the competition of the merchants of that country will conſiderably diminiſh the Britiſh trade to the Weſt Indies. From all theſe circumſtances, I think we are warranted in concluding that the trade to the Weſt Indies is rather calculated to diminiſh gradually, than to encreaſe rapidly: and that the emigration of capitaliſts from England to Ireland, to carry on this trade, is one of the wildeſt chimeras that ever entered the head of man. We have now ſhewn that Dublin may moſt likely be ruined, that Cork cannot be ſerved. It is now incumbent on us to prove that no other part of the kingdom can commercially be benefited.

That no part of Ireland, and that no kind of trade or manufacture in Ireland, can be benefited immediately by an UNION.

We are agreed on all ſides that an increaſe of capital is eſſential to an increaſe in the productive powers of labour. The difference between us now is, whether there is any thing in Union calculated to open new ſources of trade, from the ſavings of which we may encreaſe our own capital, or whether there is any thing in an Union, ſuppoſing

ſing it to take place, that muſt neceſſarily occaſion a tranſportation of capital to any part of Ireland. As for the trade of the world (except the Eaſt Indies), we have the ſame liberty as any other nation whatever; and as for the trade to the Britiſh market, we have as much of it as is neceſſary for our purpoſes. Under all the circumſtances of England and of Europe, it is clear to my underſtanding, that if an Union could occaſion the tranſportation of capital to be veſted in any buſineſs in any part of Ireland, that the meaſure never would be adopted. Sunk as England is, in debt, and with immenſe drains from her national capital, the revulſion of capital from one trade to be put in another, much more from country to country, could leaſt be admitted in times of peril and emergency. The removal of capital from one buſineſs to another, is attended with great temporary loſs. If the exiſtence of England depends on the ſilent and ſteady operation of induſtry through all its regular and ordinary channels, is it likely that the preſent miniſter, who muſt reckon on laying on new taxes every year, would throw obſtacles in his own way, or impede the progreſs of a machine, on the regular evolutions of which, the ſafety of the empire at this moment depends. An Union is not only recommended on account of the ineſtimable, but the immediate advantages which it muſt extend to Ireland. Now ſuppoſing it moſt true,

true, that the liberality of England, in permitting the tranſportation of her capital, ariſes from the certainty of being able to controul its application; and ſecondly, from her having the means at any time, by a vote of the legiſlature, to tax that capital when it becomes productive; yet what economiſt will contend, that it will not be many years after it is tranſported, and ſunk in machinery, buildings, &c. before it can give the individuals who ſend it, much leſs the ſtate which ſanctions its being ſent, an accruing profit or advantage—I aſk therefore any man to put his hand on his heart, and anſwer yes or no; does he in his conſcience believe that after the horrid ſcenes which have happened in Ireland—the notorious diſaffection of many, the indignation of all at an Union; the unſettled ſtate of human affairs over the world, and the certainty of this capital ſuppoſing it transferred, not producing for years, that Mr. Pitt would not be a vile and unprincipled enemy to England, ground down by a diſaſtrous war, if he ſuffered an Union to be carried into execution, if the capital of England was neceſſarily to be tranſported to this country. We want no ſuperior diſcernment to ſee through theſe clumſy frauds, we require not to contemplate the obſtinacy with which the meaſure is perſevered in, we need only require to obſerve the ſituation of England herſelf to have our minds perfectly enlightened on this part of the ſubject—and

yet

yet it is "Britiſh capital," to uſe the words of a learned Engliſh prelate "which will convert our bogs into fields covered with ſmiling harveſts, which will cover our barren mountains with cattle, which will work our mines and colleries, and unite the moſt diſtant parts of the country with canals, which will extend the old ſources of wealth and ſtrike out new ones and render the people of Ireland, now poor and diſcontented, rich, induſtrious and happy."

Heu quam difficile eſt crimen non prodere vultu.

OVID.

Let us now conſider this ſubject in another in another point of view—unleſs it is conceded that in England every branch of manufacture is improved to an extreme degree; every field properly cultivated and every man ſufficiently comfortable and happy—it cannot be denied but that every guinea which is tranſported to this part of the incorporate kingdom is a proportionate loſs to the induſtrious Engliſh—if this argument is well founded—it is moſt evident that thoſe who in England ſupport an Union, go much further to advance the intereſts of Ireland, than the moſt over-heated Iriſh patriots ever thought of proceeding. The former from neceſſity are contented to ameliorate the condition of the Iriſh by diminiſhing the comforts of the Engliſh. Whereas the latter certainly only profeſſed to improve Ireland by

by making the means of their country ſubſervient to that end.

But why have the great maſs of the people of England been indifferent on this occaſion. Have they been characteriſed by an eaſy and complying nature where the intereſts of the two countries were ſuppoſed to claſh? Their indifference muſt ariſe from one another of theſe cauſes. Either becauſe their country has no capital to ſpare from its own induſtry, and if it had Ireland is one of the laſt countries in Europe to which it would find its way, or becauſe there are the ſame employments for capital in England that there could be in Ireland, and as both iſlands are to be ſubjected to the ſame ſuperintending legiſlature, Capitaliſts may as well be ſubject to that control in their own nation, pariſh or city, as go traveling through the empire for a new advantageous ſituation and become outcaſts for the paltry gain of one or two per cent., and that all things being otherwiſe equal, the partiality for their native ſoil muſt naturally prevail. That in any caſe no danger can be apprehended from the meaſure. Believe me that men will reaſon ſeriouſly and think cautiouſly before they will tranſport the hopes of themſelves and their poſterity. Can you ſuppoſe when the rancarous and uncouth hoſtility of two orders of people or the various orders of the ſtate is made the moſt plauſible argument for an Union—that a man of large commercial property

perty will not turn away with diſguſt from a country which could have given an opportunity for ſuch a mode of reaſoning. Is it likely when he finds that the inhabitants of this country, never did and are never likely to agree among themſelves, that he will conclude they muſt be enamoured with the perſon or the property of the perſon—the government of whoſe country is too generally conceived to be the cauſe of all their unfortunate diſſenſions. There is one feeling for which he will give every Iriſhman credit, becauſe it is a natural one, becauſe he experiences it himſelf, the love of country:—though God knows we have a clumſy and an awkward mode of exhibiting that attachment. He will recollect that it is juſt as difficult to eradicate the love of country, or of the little platoon or ſubdiviſion to which we belong, as to blot the country itſelf out of the ſyſtem of nature,—it is impoſſible. He knows that the Highlander and Welchman feel this partial affection, though every principle of intereſt, though every ſenſe of general policy, moſt ſtrongly counteract it, and though in fact it is ſurpriſing how Scotland and Wales could ever have had a ſeparate intereſt or diſtinct exiſtence from England. Depend on it, he will conſider what the feelings of the Iriſh may be, when year after year their country will ſuffer more than the pang of inſtant death, in a painful and protracted diſſolution—when nation-

al intereſt, to ſay nothing of a ſenſe of wrongs more operative than intereſt itſelf, takes faſt hold of the ſocial affections, and reviews and calls into action the ſublime and eternal feelings, which nature herſelf has imprinted on the human heart, which will increaſe with extenſion, and expand with the progreſs of time, as ſentiments of a ſublime and immortal nature.

If in urging theſe arguments I am ſo unfortunate as to be eſteemed tedious—let it be remembered that in the eyes of every reflecting indepen. dent man, there are no other as far as relate to the expediency or inexpediency of this meaſure entitled to ſo great eſtimation—I ſhall not trouble you with what may be eſteemed falſe pride, or with what would expoſe me to the laughter and contempt of every Unioniſt, arguments drawn from the moral advantages of a reſident Legiſlature—a Legiſlature which by the by has been reduced and induſtriouſly brought into any odium which may attach to it, to furniſh the argument now drawn from its corrupted ſtate, and which it is idle in my mind to preſume, would not turn its eyes to the amelioration of the country at large, if this meaſure was buried in eternal oblivion!

But though the ſilence of the Engliſh nation may forſooth ariſe from their unprecedented and unbounded liberality to Ireland, the ſilence of a particular part of that people cannot be eaſily miſtaken

miſtaken—I ſpeak not now of perſons who though they are very uſeful to the miniſter, yet who ſeldom feel, that to enjoy at the expence of the community is often a falſe calculation, becauſe the reſult may at length be diſguſt and deteſtation. I ſpeak of theſe *Thorntons*, theſe *Giles*, and theſe *Thelluſſons*, theſe maſſy pillars of unveſted capital, of theſe great barometers of national ruin or proſperity, which would ſink to the point of miſery and deſpair, if they could diſcover any ſecret paſſage by which the capital of England could diſcharge itſelf to recruit or invigorate any country but their own. Theſe men, evidently obſerve in an Union the deep ſilent flow of a ſteady ſtream of wealth ſetting in from Ireland; or elſe their moans, their clamours and their complaints would foment and embitter the maſs of diſcontent, and ſpread alarm and diſmay through the whole iſland of Great Britain.

So far have I endeavoured by a grave foreſight to diſſipate the illuſions of fancy and of error. If there is any thing in my argument, this meaſure cannot be beneficial to both countries, though it may be to one of them. If Capital muſt neceſſarily be tranſported to Ireland, it muſt ſerve Ireland: if that be not the conſequence, what can ſhe gain by it? It is therefore evident to my underſtanding that, in proportion as we ſee this meaſure preferred to the excluſion of meaſures which may advance the intereſts of the Empire in general, without trenching on thoſe

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of Ireland in particular, in that proportion we ought to diſtruſt and diſregard the promiſes which are made, and the arguments which are advanced.

As to Scotland, after the compariſon which has been drawn between that country and this, in the incomparable ſpeech of that man (need I name the Speaker of the Iriſh Commons,) to whom and to whoſe children, feeling as I do on this queſtion—I think that Ireland cannot be too grateful for his conduct through this buſineſs, it is almoſt unneceſſary to write upon that ſubject. All we can concede is that Scotland might have been more injured by attempting to remain ſeparate, than ſhe has been, even by the Union. Scotland is an abſolute loſer by ſo much of her capital as is annually ſpent in England, whether it is remitted to pay her ſhare of taxes, or to abſentees. That ſome hundreds of Scotchmen annually are preferred to elevated ſituations by the Engliſh government, is not to be drawn as an argument of the advantage of the meaſure to Scotland at large. Scotland loſes leſs, however, than any other country could loſe under ſimilar circumſtances. The predilection the Scotch have for their country is notorious to all. Every guinea which can be gleaned in other countries by parſimony, by induſtry, by venality, is ſure to be remitted to their own, to improve patrimony, to purchaſe new eſtates, or to be veſted in native manufactures. But Ireland muſt not only be a loſer, by ſo much of her

her capital as is ſent to her abſentees, by taxes ſent to keep down the intereſt of her old debt, which will be merged into that of England, and by new taxes laid on every year to ſupply the wants of the empire; but ſhe muſt be a greater loſer than Scotland, by the hereditary diſguſt and alienation of mind of her men of large fortunes to their native country. For inſtance, there is the marquis of Lanſdown, a great ſtateſman, who knows full well that England never can give up Ireland on any condition, ſhort of her own complete ruin. A great obſerver of nations and of mankind, a man not contracted in his views, and certainly not the creature of unworthy prejudices; and yet I ſee that the paper of the day, though the Union is likely to take place, contains an advertiſement for the ſale of ſome of his Iriſh property: Though this nobleman feels, I am perſuaded, from the high honour and integrity of his agent, that that part of his eſtate which lies in the weſt of Ireland, is as well, if not better managed, than that of any other abſentee. Whatever reſpect I bear him, I own I cannot reconcile his deſire to ſell at this moment, with his expectation that his Iriſh eſtate would riſe conſiderably in value by an Union. But why ſhould I refer to any individual? I ſhould be glad to know who that abſentee is, who is fond of ſuffering his rents to accumulate, for the purpoſe of extending his fortune by purchaſing in Ireland.

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It is no anſwer to this argument, that the Union would cure this alienated mind, and render property more ſecure. Is not Ireland as ſecure as any iſland in the Weſt Indies? Is it not a much greater object for the guardian vigilance of England, than Martinique or Jamaica? Is the Iriſh peaſant more ferocious than the Indian with his ſcalping knife, the Carib, or the Maroon? And yet, taking a fair eſtimate as far as the very different natures of theſe things will admit, calculating their relative produce, and aſcertaining their relative value, ſure I am that an Iriſh eſtate might be hawked in London among the Iriſh abſentees for ever and remain unſold, when a plantation eſtate would find a purchaſer in half an hour. This is the effect of that alienated affection, which an Union will encreaſe, it cannot diminiſh it.

That no part of Ireland can be benefited, and that every trade and manufacture of native growth—muſt be GRADUALLY put down by an UNION.

But the loſs of capital to Ireland will not be ſo deplorable in its immediate, as in its conſequential diſadvantages. The wealth of Ireland which will be tranſmitted to England, will have as little chance of flowing back, as money ſent from Ireland to the fartheſt extremities of the globe. This wealth will not only have an annual tendency to re-animate ſuch manufactures in England as may require an infuſion of new life, but it will open new ſources of induſtry in England. Inſtead of re-tranſportation, even of our own wealth, from England to Ireland, or an order from the abſentees to have the money which they could

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ſave from their income, lent at intereſt, or put out in trade in Ireland; that money will be veſted in Britiſh commerce. It will enable the Britiſh merchant to export the ſurplus of his manufactures to Ireland, after ſupplying his other cuſtomers, daily and hourly having leſs ability to exclude the manufacturers of Britiſh growth, on account of the unceaſing drain from her national capital. It is thus that the Britiſh merchant will not only draw the capital, but he will likewiſe ſend us home out of that very capital, the manufactures which he would be a madman to eſtabliſh in a country, whoſe domeſtic market was becoming worſe and worſe, and which from the diminiſhed home conſumption, could not be ſold near as cheap as the ſurplus foreign produce, after all the neceſſary expences attendant on exportation. The anſwer to this is, there will be protecting duties. But when the advantages of ſmuggling the articles thus protected, is greater to the Engliſh manufacturers, than the revenue derived from thoſe duties is advantageous to the government which lays them on, and particularly when the officers who will collect theſe duties will be appointed by that very government, even though we were to rely on the purity of thoſe who project an Union NOW, yet we cannot anſwer for thoſe who may ſucceed them HEREAFTER.

Whilſt the two countries remain diſtinct and independent, their reſpective capitals performing

ing all the ſweet and endearing offices of humanity, may be compared to reſervoirs annually fed by running ſtreams and ſprings, not equally vigorous, but equally perennial: with conduits from theſe reſervoirs running through every part, refreſhing what is parched, and fructifying what is barren, until the waters they contain at length burſt open the valves,—ſcorn ſubjection,—ſpread over the reſpective ſurfaces, aſſiſting the bounties of nature, and the energies of man, and then they either meet with ſome channel, previouſly formed, and invigorate the old ſteady ſtream of wealth paſſing to its deſtined termination; or if they do not fall into a regular current, they open ſome new meandering paſſage, and ſeem to feel a pious gratitude in returning with encreaſed force, and pouring their little mite into the grand ſtock reſerved for the relief of human miſery.

Alas! how ſimple is the proceſs of nature, when undiſturbed by the meddling ignorance of man. How ſoon can madneſs and cruelty create ſterility and deſolation—ſee all the conduits of this country torn up—ſee every part of the banks intended to confine theſe waters from flowing into a foreign land, every where gaped and interfected —ſee them performing in that foreign land, thoſe offices of benevolence which they had once diſcharged in their own,—until at length they find their way to the common depoſit, and then a new paſſage is opened to any country, rather than the one

one from which they have been taken; for that, alas! in the long and melancholy period of this operation, has become a Deſert ſo nauſeous and diſguſting, as to be ſcarce fit for the reſidence of man.

Thoſe therefore who feel for multitudes of their countrymen, and for future generations, are bound to remonſtrate againſt a meaſure of ſo deadly and deplorable a tendency. Let us look at commerce in every page of hiſtory, we find her in perpetual fluctuation. Can we ſee her removing from Venice, from Florence, and Piſa, to the Netherlands, and from the Netherlands to England herſelf? Can we ſee the old republics and free cities of Italy, the firſt revivers of commerce in the ſouth, as the Hans towns were in the north, declining, with the ſolitary and accidental exception of Leghorn and Hamburgh? Can we recollect the ſeveral cities of Phœnicia, which were formerly great? Can we ſee Portugal graſping at the commerce of Venice, and then Liſbon herſelf reſigning all her trade to Amſterdam? Can we ſee our own, great ſtaple trade, ſtolen as it were from the great towns of Holland? Can we, I ſay, recollect the caprice of commerce, her fluctuations, and the deadly blow which the ſmalleſt inattention to her intereſt has always inflicted, and not endeavour to graſp the arm of ſpeculation, and decline a poiſonous draught, tho' it were made palatable by the ſweeteſt ingre-

dients? Indeed, it is not ſituation, nor fertility of ſoil, which can alone ſecure to a country a great home or foreign trade. Of this, the Dutch, among the moderns, were a ſtriking and remarkable proof. What wealth had not Holland amaſſed among her marſhes! What poverty does not ſtill prevail in Scotland, though with great comparative advantages of ſoil and ſituation!— Here I cloſe the argument on the commercial part of this queſtion. I have felt as I have proceeded, that the ſubject was far beyond my ſtrength, my knowledge, and my talents, but it was far inferior to my zeal.

If in theſe hypotheſes I am as right in your opinions as I conceive myſelf to be, I ſolemnly declare, that I cannot foreſee how any efforts of individuals, of aſſociated bodies of merchants, or even of the imperial legiſlature itſelf, can give the thouſands and hundreds of thouſands of individuals, who will be wounded by this meaſure, an opportunity of ſupporting themſelves and their families. Is the information which we daily receive from every part of the country, calculated to encourage further ſpeculations on this ſubject? In the manufacturing parts of the kingdom, the numbers thrown out of employ are already alarming. Do we not obſerve the general comparative loſs of confidence and credit recoil even on Cork itſelf; and can it be imagined in the preſent actual ſtate of the commercial world, that any

any meaſure which may interrupt confidence, or depreſs the nation, will not vibrate through its remoteſt extremities, until failure follows failure, and until the whole of our raſhneſs and our folly is diſcovered in the encreaſe of the poor, the deficiency of revenue, and the general oppreſſion and miſery of the people.

Thoſe are not fancy pictures. The propoſal of ſuch meaſure in the beſt days of national exaltation and commercial ſplendor, may be attended with the moſt alarming conſequences. But to propoſe it in a devaſtating war, whoſe conſequences no human wiſdom can foreſee, to attempt it at a period when the whole commercial world has been ſhaken to its centre, when many individuals in both nations, with the moſt ſolid capitals, are compelled to ſtop payment, from the general ſtagnation of trade, from the return of bills, and from ſudden demands being made, which they cannot anſwer at once, argues a courage little ſhort of deſpair. Our country has indeed been in a moſt diſtracted ſituation, but for its misfortunes, an Union is not the remedy. The war becomes thro' Europe more than ever the cauſe of internal calamities, and peace is the only effectual cure. That man muſt have moved in a narrow circle, who has not been able to diſcern, that with the widely claſhing views, the different intereſts, and the wild and quixotic ſpeculations prevalent in the Iriſh mind, ſo far from an Union having

qualities calculated to huſh the warring elements of faction and of paſſion into repoſe, that nothing can ſoften the reciprocal indignation of diſcordant factions, but prudent management, an efficient reſident government, and a general peace.

But though for the purpoſe of argument it may now be conceded, that no commercial advantage can be derived from an Union, yet it may be contended, that the benefits to reſult from this meaſure, in ſecuring our connexion with England, and increaſing the ſtability of the empire, are ſo very great, that it is neither wiſe nor prudent to oppoſe it. That benevolence which would voluntarily ſacrifice its own advantages to advance the proſperity of another, has never been, and is not now, the characteriſtic of any country; and the moſt obvious anſwer to an argument of this kind is, that let our good wiſhes for the empire be ever ſo great, the particular proſperity of our own country muſt ever predominate.

Preſent connexion maintained.

But againſt the body of Unioniſts in both countries, I take as a preſiding principle, the principle of alliance or reciprocal allegiance to a common king, againſt that of Union: and contend, that by acting on this principle, we are more likely to give ſtability to empire, than by proceeding on any other principle whatever.—It is only, by the moſt ingenious ſophiſtry, that Union and dominion are not ſhewn to be completely analogous. There can be no doubt but that

that by an Union, as complete a legiſlative ſupremacy may be maintained over Ireland, as oppoſed to England when the repreſentatives of the Engliſh nation feel an inclination or an intereſt in exerciſing that ſupremacy, as could proceed from naked uncontrouled dominion. It is clear in the event of an Union, that ſuch a generous attention to the intereſts of Ireland as the nature of the caſe will admit, muſt proceed more from the prudential and honourable motives of the Britiſh members, than from any poſſibility of their being controuled by perſons naturally allied or peculiarly intereſted in the property of this part of the empire. The argument drawn from the Iriſh members having a right to legiſlate for England, has no weight; they can never be a majority. So that when the Unioniſts contend that our having a reſident legiſlature, without any intereſt in our proſperity, and under a compleat ſubſerviency to that power with which we are called on to unite, is our irremediable evil, they then very ſagaciouſly endeavour to ſhew, that an Union with that very power, which occaſioned the native legiſlature not having that lively intereſt in our proſperity, is for all our misfortunes the ſafeſt and moſt certain remedy. In other words, the greater the injury we receive, the greater the confidence we ſhould beſtow on the power who inflicts it—if it is true therefore, that as the countries ſtand connected at preſent, there are

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ſome evils, it is no leſs true that in the event of an Union there would be poſitive evils alſo, and on the great view of preſent connexion and of an Union, the poſitive preſiding evils being equal—all things being equal in this reſpect, the collateral argument is hollow againſt the meaſure.

Between Union and dominion there is no eſſential difference. In a cloſe and ſteady alliance there may be all the advantages which we are told will flow from an Union, without any of the diſadvantages which are aſcribed to that meaſure. What rights, what advantages are there which we did not poſſeſs under the Conſtitution of Ireland which we could poſſeſs by incorporation? The conſtitutions are identically the ſame. If your legiſlature is corrupt, a ſpotleſs purity is not the characteriſtic of an Engliſh Houſe of Commons. The governing part of mankind in every country, are not exempt from this imputation. If we are to credit the new revolutioniſts in France, corruption had pervaded every department in the ſtate, even before its government had a ſeven years duration. If for the purpoſe of putting down rebellion, the moſt valuable part of the conſtitution has been ſurrendered for the preſervation of the whole, is it to be credited, that ſo long as the cauſes which create the neceſſity of keeping up a ſtrong military government ſubſiſt, that government will not be maintained? Are we ſo blind as not to foreſee that the ſame

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means which were uſed to preſerve the connexion when it was eſſayed, would not be had recourſe to, to preſerve the incorporation if it was endangered? Is it fair to draw arguments from thoſe extremes; and if the complaint of the day is, that we have no actual national government, that it is the Engliſh miniſter who dictates every thing, that we have a government only in name; how can that complaint be removed, by ſhewing that in theory and in reality, we have loſt all national government of every kind? To thoſe who did not complain before, Union is inſult; to thoſe who did complain before, it is an aggravation of the evil. Indeed the events of the world do not weaken the obſervation of an eloquent writer, when he ſays, that though a man of warm ſpeculative benevolence may wiſh his ſociety otherwiſe conſtituted than he finds it, yet that a good and a true politician will always conſider how he ſhall make the moſt of the exiſting materials of his country. A diſpoſition to preſerve, and an ability to improve, would be my ſtandard of a ſtateſman; every thing elſe is vulgar in the conception, and perilous in the execution. I ſo far agree with Mr. Burke in condemning no form of Government on abſtract principles—but I own I would rather eſtimate all Governments by the bleſſings which they adminiſter and the protection they afford, than by forms of any kind. Sure I am that when that eloquent writer whoſe

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words I have now quoted, ſays "that a diſpoſition to preſerve and an ability to improve would be his ſtandard of a ſtateſman," that he might very well have enforced his ſentiment, by ſhewing on the authority of all hiſtory, that the evils which have been occaſioned by pulling down any ſyſtem, which has anſwered in any tolerable degree for the common purpoſes of ſociety, have entailed more dreadful conſequences than the actual continuation of the evil intended to be removed. Looking therefore at the nature of things, rather than the humours of men, I muſt contend on every view of our relative ſituations, the reſources, the genius and the temper of Iriſhmen, on every principle of national intereſt, ſafety and proſperity, of advantage even to England herſelf, that this iſland is not calculated to become a ſhred or ſcrap of Empire, that the attempt to make her ſo will occaſion external weakneſs and never ceaſing conſpiracy, and having my mind by the Conſtitution of the land, by the habits of national education, by the uniform declaration of the moſt virtuous and diſcerning of mankind, as well as by the dictates of my own calm deliberative and unbiaſſed reaſon, impreſſed with the advantage of diſtinct Legiſlatures—I do look back to the bloodleſs revolution of 1782 as one of the happieſt in the hiſtory of mankind. "Here no rage, no phrenſy pulled down more in an half hour than prudence, deliberation,

deliberation and foreſight could build up in an hundred years." Then it was that the moſt happy Revolution was effected, on principles the moſt purely pacific; though the pious hands which carried it into execution have lately been ſubjected to the ſevereſt chaſtiſement, and been rebuked as ungrateful children, who took advantage of the diſtreſſes of their parent, when they demanded and obtained what never ought to have been withheld, the common rights of mankind. Why is it that the recollection of theſe events is dear to every Iriſhman? Becauſe they ſaw happily effected without any interruption to the good harmony eſſential to the preſervation of theſe iſlands, what otherwiſe might ariſe from devaſtating war. Whilſt dominion was uſurped, it was unprofitable, even whilſt the appearance of it remained, the connection was inſecure.

Happy æra! Happy nation! And yet how happy the recollection of theſe happy times!

No longer did the wretched inhabitant of this afflicted country, ſit with his charts and compaſſes before him, navigating his way to any foreign clime—for in no other country was he denied the privileges refuſed him in his own;—no longer did he ſit upon the ſhores of his impoveriſhed and deſerted iſland, gazing on the hills of an unfriendly ſiſter, who emancipated the African the moment he put his foot upon her ſoil, whilſt ſhe retained ſo many millions of her neareſt neighbours in

an abject and unworthy vaſſalage;—no ſooner did the ſun of our independence appear above our horizon, than languid nature felt its influence and utility, the muſic of the ſhuttle and the ſong of the ploughman were every where ſubſtituted for the throbs of famiſhed multitudes heaved under the tyranny of corrupt power—how many calamities were then ſoothed, how many tears were then wiped away;—how many ſources o comfort were then opened to the genius and the induſtry of man. I own that it is with a mixture of religious awe and pious admiration that I look back upon the occurrences of theſe times—when the cauſes of the diſſenſions between the two iſlands were diſcuſſed with ſo much moderation, when a laudable and generous ambition was not circumſcribed within the ſphere of party, and when the reſult was an amiable return to that mutual benevolence and forgiving friendſhip, which re-united family to family, city to city, and nation to nation, which gave a farm to the peaſant, and a ſhop to the artiſt, and gave to ſo many millions a ſcope and vegetation in the ſyſtem of the univerſe, which they never before had the good fortune to enjoy.—Theſe were the times for national exultation, particularly when added to the other advantages which we received from it, we daily ſaw returning to their proper hemiſphere, theſe bodies which had previouſly moved in a diſtant firmament, and ſaw them beginning to perform

form in the midſt of their looped and ragged tenantry, the ſame part which the ſun acts in the firmament of Heaven, cheriſhing, protecting, foſtering, illumining and retaining in their proper ſphere the planets which move around him.

I know that it is the effort of a party of the day to under-rate and to under-value the occurrences of theſe times. The principle of the arrangement was a good one, and all that can be ſaid againſt it is, that it has been abuſed. There is nothing human which I could not condemn with the ſame candour and propriety. Would I be liſtened to a ſingle moment if I roſe in the Britiſh parliament, and contended that becauſe the influence of the crown was encreaſed to an alarming degree, therefore the revolution of 1688, by which the king holds his crown and the people their liberties—was a weak, miſerable, inefficient occurrence. Yet the one would be juſt as good an argument as the other.—If when an innumerable body of that which was ſtiled the London Correſponding Society inſtead of holding its laſt meeting, ſurrounded with magiſtrates and their guards, having its orators dragged from their tribunes,—itſelf routed and diſperſed,—if inſtead of this this body had conſpired in ſecret, had been exerciſed in concealed places as it was charged with being exerciſed—had collected arms, and proceeded to deluge England with blood—would it be right to charge the revolution of 1688, or

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the memory of Lord Somers with being the cauſe of the cataſtrophe—yet we are called on in this country to deny if we can, that the late rebellion was not the fruit of the bleſſed tree that was planted in 1782 by the hands of Mr. Grattan—In the very ſame breath we are called on to ſubſtitute the Conſtitution of England for that of Ireland, as if the Conſtitution of England had not been aſſailed, before that of Ireland was openly attacked—Is the Iriſh Government conſiderably weakened by its ſucceſsful reſiſtance to that artfully planned ſyſtem of aſſault, which in its execution aſtoniſhed every man, except thoſe who owed it to the ſtate to watch its proceedings, or to thoſe (melancholy fatality, that it ever ſhould have been projected!) whoſe buſineſs it was to direct its operations? Shall numbers of the beſt men of Ireland who never harboured a treaſonable intention, but who could not contemplate the cruel and heart-rending manner in which the public mind was teized and fretted, and who could not obſerve the Conſtitution ſapped and undermined at one ſide by the aſſaults of power, on the other expoſed to annihilation by the moſt infuriate exceſſes of a maddened people, without a melancholy bordering on deſpair, be now cheered up and re-animated by this ſovereign reſtorative? In ſuch times it is indeed moſt true that men of this deſcription are mere blanks in the ſyſtem of

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the univerſe. But would it not be a moſt flagrant abſurdity to infer, that becauſe men looked at the paſt ſcenes with regret, that therefore they muſt neceſſarily become enamoured of a meaſure, which to ſay no worſe of it, appears to have its origin in the meaneſt and blindeſt malice. Is it fair to infer becauſe your Conſtitution of 1782 has ſo long been mouldering in the grave, that even the monumental records of what it was, are in danger of being effaced from the page of hiſtory, that therefore in a ſtart of phrenzy you ſhould be borne through all the ſtages of malignity, and induced to aſſign every remaining part to a ſpeedy and eternal oblivion! It is indeed an arduous undertaking to calm all the little buſy and fretful paſſions, that hurry partizans into enquiries pregnant with every kind of danger, and into altercations out of which there is no creeping without the moſt deſtructive calamities. But let it be remembered that it is not impoſſible to employ partial evils in effecting the common good: that it is not impoſſible, that by mutual conceſſions, the jarring claims of contending factions might not yet be reconciled, and that by mutual forbearance and a ſteady Government the wounds of this bleeding country might not yet be ſtaunched.

Competence of Parliament denied.

And here it is that it may properly be expected that I ſhould expreſs an opinion on the competence or incompetence of Parliament to effect this change.

change. I contend that every principle of the Britiſh Conſtitution as eſtabliſhed in 1688, and of the Iriſh Conſtitution as eſtabliſhed in 1782, is abandoned, and that every commentary which has been written on theſe Conſtitutions is a mockery and inſult to the underſtanding, if this meaſure is ſanctioned and allowed; and I likewiſe maintain that the doctrines on which the diſſolution of our legiſlature is juſtified, ſo far from being circumſcribed in their application to this country, or thisidentical conſtitution, tend to total ſubverſion, not only of all regular governments in all modes, and to all the ſtable ſecurities of eſtabliſhed inſtitutions, but to every rule and principle of morality itſelf. How do thoſe advocates who would give the feeble efforts of weak finite mortals all the properties, all the attributes which belong to the godhead proceed? they beg the queſtion. When they are nearly run down by ſhewing that Union and revolution are completely analogous, and cannot morally be juſtified, they ſkulk and abandon the queſtion of right, and retreat behind the inexpediency of the revolution which they intend, and the power with which they are armed to carry it into execution. Might and right are then convertible terms. The cautious and wily Mr. Pitt, aware of the danger of puſhing the argument to the extreme extent, gave full ſcope for his great declamatory powers by the moſt miſerable diſtortion of facts. He either contended

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that the arrangement of 1782 was not final nor concluſive, (though I for one have in the ſix laſt years heard him repeatedly upbraid Mr. Fox for even alluding to the affairs of a country governed by its own FREE, DISTINCT, AND INDEPENDENT LEGISLATURE) or he admitted the fact, and then after a ſweeping panegyric and a lofty flouriſh on the omnipotence of Parliament, *there he left the queſtion.* Theſe extreme caſes are not in the view of the Britiſh Conſtitution. Though ſuch a meaſure may be effected by violence and power, it cannot be defended on any of its principles. That Conſtitution was inveſted with an immortal character, and it modeſtly preſumes that thoſe who are entruſted with its adminiſtration, will imbibe the ſpirit of its canonized founders, look back upon their anceſtors, and look forward to their poſterity. It does indeed foreſee inſtances, when it may be neceſſary that its rights ſhould be re-aſſerted, ſuch as at 1688; but it ſees no poſſible event which could juſtify its being buried in an eternal grave. That Conſtitution repoſes too much on its wiſdom, its virtue and its humanity, to believe that it ever could become a ſubject for attack, and it relies with the fondeſt hope and the moſt endearing ſimplicity, that when an aſſault is made on it from any quarter, it will be honourably and courageouſly repulſed. This is its character, this its ſecurity. What are thoſe weapons with which it is aſſaulted by unhallowed and ungrateful

ſul hands. A noble lord* (of another country) has facetiouſly aſſerted, that all the arguments againſt the competence of Parliament have been taken from the democratic ſchool, and as his enthuſiaſm kindles as he advances, he contends that this happy change can alone be diſliked by the moſt incorrigible jacobins of both nations; and when he comes to his peroration, he equally accuſes thoſe perſons for their alacrity to deſtroy, and their diſpoſition to defend, and leſt he might not keep pace with thoſe who ſupport the queſtion in the double manner to which I have already alluded; the noble Lord is more inclined to be ſtigmatized for abſurdity in argument, than deficiency in abuſe: *and there he leaves the queſtion.*

A RIGHT REVEREND, AND CERTAINLY VERY LEARNED PRELATE † took upon himſelf to diſcuſs the abſtract point, whether Parliament had a right to vote its own extinction? and if that right was well founded, whether it did not apply as well to the Britiſh as the Iriſh Parliament; and after aſſerting, (what nobody can deny) that right and obligation are correlative terms, and if men did not know their rights, they could not underſtand what conſtituted obligation, and then declaring that it was a queſtion on which unanimity could not be expected,—*there he left the queſtion.* Another

* Lord Auckland. † Biſhop of Landaff.

ther noble Lord *, the once viceroy of Corſica, a man well verſed certainly in the formation of conſtitutions, but not equally happy in giving them a permanent and hereditary feature, after conſidering with no common ability the queſtion of Union in the view of the relative ſituations of the two countries, at laſt comes to the queſtion of competence; and then declares that to one deſcription of the people of Ireland the *ultima ratio regum* could be the only anſwer; and when he argued the queſtion with the other, he juſtified the propriety of Parliament voting its own extinction, firſt on the expediency of the meaſure, (the queſtion at iſſue) and ſecondly by aſſuming the unlimited ſupremacy of the Iriſh Parliament (the thing to be proved) *and there he left the queſtion.* The other lords † who have printed their ſpeeches and tranſmitted them for re-publication in Ireland, have ſupported the univerſal faculties of Parliament, and its competence to this ſpecific meaſure of a Legiſlative Union with another country; by two ſorts of authority, on the opinions of learned and eminent men, ſuch as *Lord Somers* and the whigs of 1688, whoſe opinions by the by are completely adverſe to ſuch proceedings; and 2dly by endeavouring to make the precedents taken from other governments long deſtroyed, precedents for our ſubverting our own. They attempt

* Lord Minto. † Lords Bordingon and Grenville.

to convert that which at beſt is only an argument on the expediency of Union, into a philoſophic analogy, between different governments; and they draw this extraordinary inference, that becauſe the Britiſh Conſtitution has ſubverted ſome minor neighbouring governments, therefore the Britiſh Conſtitution has a right to deſtroy itſelf. In other words, becauſe there was an Union of the Heptarchy—becauſe England is England, and England has extended her government over Wales and over Scotland, both of whoſe Conſtitutions, for what I know, or for what I care, authoriſed thoſe entruſted with their adminiſtration to deſtroy them at pleaſure, *ergo*, it is a conſtitutional princi-ple in the Engliſh (that is to ſay Iriſh) Govern-ment that it may vote its own diſſolution. This is the mode of argument adopted in England, and purſued in all the ſpeeches and pamphlets of union-iſts in Ireland. But what renders the attempt to reply to thoſe topics moſt truly afflicting to me, is the painful reflection of being preſent when moſt of thoſe very perſonages applauded the grant of 4000l. per annum penſion (to that man whoſe me-mory I venerate now, in the ſame proportion that I was enraptured with his great talents then,—I mean Mr. Burke) for employing his imprial fan-cy in laying all nature under contribution, when he maintained in his writings, and they ſupported in their ſpeeches, doctrines the moſt adverſe in-deed to thoſe which they have now ventured to expreſs—

expreſs—doctrines, which if ever countenanced, will tranſmit this melancholy abſurdity to poſterity; that though for ten years every kind of innovation was rejected for fear of leading to a revolution, yet that when revolution itſelf was propoſed, it was not only acceded to with pleaſure and complacency, but juſtified on principles ſtrictly conſtitutional.

O melancholy inſtance of human inconſiſtency!—When the profeſſions, the arguments, the truths maintained during a controverſy of ten years are now, that a ſuperior ſtate feels it her intereſt, and ſees that ſhe has the power to ſport with the ſacred bleſſings of a portion of mankind, —forgotten and denied. Let us collect all the arguments on the competence of Parliament, and they will be found reducible under one of thoſe heads: 1ſt, Principles of Conſtitution,—2d, Precedent,—3d, Authority,—4th, Power. The firſt head involves thoſe points: What is the quantity of power? and what is the quality of the truſt confided to Parliament? The fallacy of the whole argument reſpecting the competence of Parliament, depends on an aſſumption on the part of Parliament individually, of thoſe rights which belong to the whole nation collectively. I defy any perſon to ſhew one inſtance in which any writer on the laws of nations or on the conſtitutions of ſtates, maintains that the legiſlative power can change the Conſtitution, except where the nation has in expreſs

terms given it the expreſs power of change; or except where the legiſlative enters into a debate on the propriety of making a total change in the government, and the whole nation is voluntarily ſilent upon it, in which caſe this ſilence is to be conſidered as an approbation of the acts of its repreſentatives.—The Conſtitution of a State ought to be fixed, and ſince that was firſt eſtabliſhed by the nation which afterwards truſted certain perſons with the legiſlative power; the fundamental laws are excepted from their commiſſion. Theſe legiſlators derive their power from the Conſtitution, and they cannot change it without deſtroying the foundation of their authority.

The principle of change is not that of the Britiſh Conſtitution. For the beſt reaſons that prinple was reprobated at the revolution—becauſe the men who directed it were moderate and wiſe, and becauſe the hiſtory of the ancient republics particularly that of Athens ſhewed them that principle was contrary to the happineſs of ſociety, and was at length fatal to the liberty of the Athenian people, of which they were ſo jealous without knowing how to enjoy it. In our Conſtitution the two houſes of Parliament in concert with the King exerciſe the legiſlative power, and if there is no moral and ſocial obligation to preſerve the form of Government—the two houſes of Parliament might reſolve to ſuppreſs themſelves, and with the concurrence of the king

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inveſt him with the full and abſolute Government, as well as it might vote its own diſſolution. The Conſtitution ſaw how far the principle might be puſhed and it truly never recognized it—*ſo much for principle!*

As for precedent, I have endeavoured before to make a diſtinction between the government of a country receiving a few members within its own boſom; and that government voting its own diſſolution. There is a material difference in my humble comprehenſion between the Parliament of Ireland agreeing to receive a few members from the kingdom of Kerry (ſuppoſing it independent), and that Parliament ſealing its own death warrant—neither the ſubmiſſion of Wales, the treaty with Scotland;—nor the exerciſe of the power on the part of the Britiſh Parliament, can at all influence this queſtion. There is a great difference between extending the power of the ſtate, and deſtroying the means by which all power may be extended. It is not to be contended becauſe the gentlemen of the Houſe of Commons may hire out the "USUFRUCT" of their voices, that therefore they have a right to part with the FEE and INHERITANCE,*—much leſs becauſe they have the power to extend the Conſtitution to others, they therefore have a right to deſtroy the Conſtitution itſelf—what is moſt like a conſtitutional precedent for our Legiſlature exerciſing a ſovereign

* Burke.

ſovereign controul, is, what is vulgarly called the *revolution* of 1688. It is contended that the proceedings of theſe days were not of leſs importance, than any Union, or any other national event that is either known or can be imagined; and that therefore as there is no difference between the greatneſs of the object to be atchieved, there is no difference between the power to be exerciſed. I aſſert that it was under the very fear that ſuch an argument might be adduced, that the Commons declared an abhorrence againſt innovation of any kind, leſt it might ſhake the ſubmiſſion of poſterity to the Conſtitution:— They declared that the throne was abdicated— They maintained the principles of the Conſtitution, they did not deſtroy it. *So much for precedent.* Now as to authority, it is to thoſe who re-aſſerted the exiſting Government of England (of which that of Ireland is a perfect tranſcript) that we muſt naturally refer, and I undertake to ſay, that Lord Somers and the whigs of 1688, proceeded on this principle "that an uninterrupted inheritance furniſhed the ſureſt principle of conſervation and the ſafeſt principle of tranſmiſſion, without excluding the principle of improvement, and that the Britiſh Conſtitution gloried in the idea of being tranſmitted to poſterity in the ſame manner in which we tranſmit property and life." It was therefore that at the trial of *Sacheverel*, that *Sir Joſeph Jekyl*, Mr. *Lechmere*,

Lechmere, *Walpole*, and *Sir John Holland*, all diſclaimed the ruinous doctrine of the power of Parliament extending to the new modelling the ſtate. They countenanced no doctrine amounting to a diſſolution of the contract between the crown and the people, which they contended always had an exiſtence. They gave no precedent to authoriſe the change in the form of government; but they were uniform and conſiſtent in their endeavours to prevent the regal power being ſwallowed up on pretence of popular rights, or the popular rights being deſtroyed on pretence of legiſlative power. They did as Mr. Burke well expreſſed it (in his ſpeech in the Houſe of Commons in 1790,) "they prevented a revolution and diſclaimed all competency to make one; they took ſolid ſecurities—they ſettled doubtful queſtions and corrected anomalies in our law, in the ſtable fundamental parts they made no revolution—the nation kept the ſame ranks—the ſame orders—the ſame privileges—the ſame franchiſes—the ſame commons—the ſame corporations and the ſame electors," they neither impaired the monarchy nor voted their diſſolution; and to uſe the words of the Whigs themſelves "to innovate on the Conſtitution could not be allowed, nay it would have been a crime—the revolution did not introduce any innovation, it was only the reſtoration of the ancient fundamental Conſtitution

of

of the kingdom and giving it its proper force and energy."

This is a painful argument to thoſe who have ever loved or admired the beſt principles of our mixed form of Government. Theſe are bitter ſenſations to thoſe who like myſelf are juſt able to remember that they ſaw, or thought they ſaw in the year 1782 the Sun of Iriſh Independence, riſing with majeſty and grandeur above the horizon, cautiouſly and gradually diſpelling the black clouds of bigotry and prejudice; drying up thoſe places which were watered with tears and wetted with the blood of a divided and diſcontented people. Theſe are heart-rending notions to thoſe who have been educated in the beſt principles of that Conſtitution, who have conſidered it a pledge of national amity and love, and who have no reaſon to change the opinion of their early life, that it had all the rudiments eſſential to good Government. Theſe are the days of recommencing affliction to thoſe who have been compelled to narrow their converſe to the intimacy of a few, whoſe liberality, mild and lovely, would like the "ſober evenings ray," unite the diſcordant elements into peace, leſt the tranquillity of ſociety might be ſhattered by the wild and undiſciplined contentions of religious and political enthuſiaſts, or its harmony untuned by the riotous inurbanity of maddened bigotry. Indeed the Unioniſts may if they pleaſe gnaw the Conſtitution as eſtabliſhed

bliſhed in 1782 with vermin whiſpers, and worry it with unbecoming reproaches. But that Conſtitution denies that it ever gave any power to thoſe who ſhould be entruſted with its care, to extinguiſh it for ever. It ſays "indeed *it is difficult to give limits to the mere abſtract competence of the ſupreme power, but the limits of a moral competence, ſubjecting occaſional will to permanent reaſon, and to the ſteady maxims of faith, juſtice, and fixed fundamental policy, are perfectly intelligible, and perfectly binding on thoſe who exerciſe any authority under any name, or under any title in the ſtate.—The Houſe of Lords is not morally competent to diſſolve itſelf, nor to abdicate, if it would, its portion of the Legiſlature of the kingdom. By as ſtrong or a ſtronger reaſon, the Houſe of Commons cannot renounce its ſhare of authority. The engagement and pact of ſociety which generally goes by the name of the Conſtitution, forbids ſuch innovation and ſuch ſurrender. The conſtituent parts of a ſtate muſt hold their public faith with each other, and with all thoſe who derive a ſerious intereſt under their engagement, as much as the whole ſtate is bound to keep its faith with ſeparate communities. Otherwiſe competence and power would be entirely confounded, and no law left but the will of a prevailing force."—Theſe are

* Burke's reflections.

my reaſons for denying the competence of Parliament to deſtroy the Conſtitution of Ireland, and if they are not concluſive and ſatisfactory I ſee no cauſe why the Imperial Legiſlature might not as well vote an Union with France, as the parliament of Ireland vote an Union with Great Britain.

Cloſe connexion with England thro' the medium of a reſident legiſlature invigorated and improved, tried as a conſervative principle for Ireland and the Empire.

Here then in my opinion, this enquiry might very ſafely be cloſed. If this meaſure is on re-examination calculated to depreſs your country,—if there is no power in Parliament to effect this change, what other topics are there which require to be inveſtigated? yes, there are great difficulties ſtill to be overcome,—difficulties which no feeling mind can look at without a tear, but which no magnanimous heart could let paſs without ſuitable obſervation. Since I have ventured to expreſs an opinion on a great ſubject, to a great and enlightened public, I feel it a duty which I owe that public, a duty which I owe my own character as a man, not to be broken down or diſcouraged by any obſtacles which the unhappy ſituation of the world in general, or the more afflicting ſituation of this country in particular, may throw in the way of a generous policy and an endearing magnanimity. When therefore I attempt to explore all the difficulties, all the dangers which hang over this country, I think I can commence ſuch a carreer with a mind at leaſt untainted with malignity, with baſe factious views, or vindictive malice, but

not

not without its being conſiderably awed by a fearful ſenſe of the uncertainty which impends over all the judgments and all the affairs of men. I know that in the divided and diſtracted ſtate of Ireland, I have no reaſon to expect that I ſhall ever hear the grateful muſic of my country's eſtimation for expreſſing the honeſt ſentiments of my heart. If on the other hand, I ſhall be certain of meeting the ſneers of the deſperate, and the frowns of the powerful, I ſhall on the other have all the conſolation which ariſes from the exerciſe of a calm, unbiaſſed, and deliberative reaſon, diſclaiming to be fed with the viſions and imaginations of things, which even if effected, could never be realized without the reciprocated retaliations of blood and rapine, and without greater ſacrifices than any country under Heaven was ever yet neceſſitated to make.—I do ſay then, that under all the melancholy and afflicting ſcenes which we have witneſſed in our own country, under all the circumſtances of Europe, under the various commercial and political relations in which we ſtand to Great Britain, under every view of national intereſt and imperial policy, the greateſt poſſible good which can ariſe to Ireland, with the leaſt poſſible evil, is a connexion with England on principles which England can ſubſcribe to, without the ſacrifice of her deareſt intereſts or her dignity, and which Ireland can adhere to without the ſurrender of her honor. A reſident legiſ-

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ſlature and her exiſting conſtitution cleanſed, as much as the unioniſts pleaſe, of thoſe abuſes which have been admitted upon all ſides ſince the commencement of the preſent diſcuſſion. Theſe are no times, when all confidence between all deſcriptions of perſons of all nations is cut up, for any perſons of any nation to repoſe an unbounded confidence in the profeſſions of ſtrangers. Theſe are no times for having our politics dependent on every ſhip which ſails from the port of our enemy; or veering and ſhifting in our ſpeculations, when a new battalion is attached to *the army of England*.—No, no, they are times for cleaving to ſome vigorous and manly principles which arreſt our common notice, becauſe they embrace our common intereſt.

Every ſtep I approach the principle already laid down, I ſee the reſtoration of national peace and encreaſed ſecurity to the Britiſh empire.—When I turn my back upon it, there is nothing ſtable, nothing permanent, nothing ſecure. One dreary dreadful viſto of national ruin preſents itſelf,—of claſhing claims, and quixotic ſpeculations. One thing certain ariſing out of the extravagant ſublimities and eccentric rovings of our minds, the deſtruction of this commercial country, and the ſlaughter of multitudes of the braveſt and the moſt virtuous of the community. Take any other principle, and we confound all meaſure between means and ends—our headlong deſires become our poli-

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tics and our morals. On one ſide we have France briſtling in arms, covered over with her bracelets and adulterous trinkets, breathing the moſt ſeductive but deſtructive promiſes, and incapable of realizing EVEN the pure profeſſions of love and affection, without almoſt blotting the country out of the ſyſtem of nature. When we tranſlate the words: "attempt at SEPARATION from England by the aſſiſtance of French force," we muſt ſet down ſo much for the marches and countermarches of conflicting armies, for defeats and victories,—ſo much for the workings of ferocious paſſions raiſed to their greateſt height by mutual revenge and reciprocal outrages,—ſo much for ſlaughter in the field, ſo much for ſecret murders and muffled conſpiracies,—ſo much for famine brought upon a province,—ſo much for the ſuſpenſion of every kind of trade,—ſo much for widows and orphans,—ſo much for maſſacres and aſſaſſinations in every place—of every kind,—ſo much for the confiſcations and permutations of property of thoſe who oppoſed that enemy, preſuming him ſucceſsful,—ſo much for thouſands doomed to waſte away an exiſtence in the dreary precincts of a priſon, or to periſh on a ſcaffold, ſuppoſing him defeated and ſubdued,—ſo much for Great Britain whilſt undiſputed miſtreſs of the ſeas, diminiſhing (if the enemy ſucceeded) the means of his aſſault on her own territory, by deſtroying every thing which contributed to our national

national ſtrength,—ſo much for this enemy drawing his reſources from an haraſſed and impoveriſhed land, in proportion to the violence and vigor with which he was aſſailed,—ſo much for letting looſe the dæmons of rapine and luſt within the field of cultivated ſociety, and giving to the brutal ferocity of the moſt ferocious its full ſcope and range of invention. There is no occaſion to heighten this picture by recurring to the conduct which this enemy has purſued, to thoſe countries he has invaded, nor no neceſſity to examine thoſe new principles which have emanated from minds —full grown and matured. Whether defeated, whether ſucceſsful, theſe are a few of the certain, poſitive, and immediate evils, which ruſh on my imagination, when in one view of the queſtion I depart from the preſiding principle which I have already ſtated,—*cloſe connexion with England, through the medium of a reſident legiſlature, invigorated and improved.*—

——————When raſhneſs drives
Impetuous on, the ſcourge of Heaven uplifted
Laſhes the Fury forward.——

Again is it for ever to be the great misfortune of our nature, not to know where to ſtop, or how to compound with ſituations? Are we to loſe all we have ever gained, becauſe we cannot obtain all we have ever wanted? We would do well likewiſe to tranſlate this word Union; and

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if I have failed in convincing your minds, I have at leaſt ſatisfied my own, that it is a meaſure on the part of a ſuperior ſtate, of loftineſs, confidence, and rigor, when moderation, prudence and equality ought to be purſued. It is an abandonment of the long tried, long valued *principle of holding communities together by an evident and ſolid intereſt*, for the little wretched, ſhifting politics of the day. It is a feeble attempt to diſturb and force nature, and to occaſion what is generally the conſequence of ſuch an interruption of the arrangement ſhe has made, diſcontent, diſtruſt and confuſion. I ſhall not heighten the picture, becauſe I ſhall entertain the ſuppoſition that it never will be realized, and becauſe I write not for the applauſe of a giddy populace, but to the calm and approving judgment of enlightened men.—Here then I ſee nothing but miſery to the country and conſequently weakneſs to the Empire, when I depart from the preſiding, immutable principle which I have already laid down, *cloſe connection with England, through the medium of a reſident Legiſlature invigorated and improved.*

But let us weigh every thing with prudence and with care. What is the preſent ſituation of the country? The exiſting government conſiderably ſtrengthened, 1ſt, by proving itſelf ſuperior to plans madly laid, and deſperately attempted; and ſecondly, by the ſtrong continuing recollection on the part of all ranks and deſcriptions of people,

1ſt, By a review of the ſtate of Ireland.

ple, of the dreadful evils of their letting loose a populace; and certainly not weakened in the eyes of any rational and reflecting man, by the extraordinary ſcenes which we have witneſſed in another country. Defended from without, by a navy unequalled in the beſt time of Britiſh hiſtory; and within, with a more gallant and powerful army, than the hiſtory of Ireland can furniſh an example of. The taxes not unproductive (thanks to the foreſight and liberality with which the new *Chancellor of the Exchequer* has commenced his career) under all the preſſure of the times, and the melancholy extent to which this unhappy war has been protracted—I do not declare that there are not cauſes, for dejection, for humiliation, for ſorrow; all I aſſert is, that there are none for deſpair. Therefore it is that I might apply the words which were uſed by *Demoſthenes* to induce the Athenians not to ſink under, but to bear up againſt, the preſſure of their misfortunes. We have indeed reaſon to rejoice that we can draw our future hopes from our paſt calamities, for if we had acted in every thing as we ought, and the alienation of mind and the religious and political diſſenſions between the inhabitants of the ſame country were in the ſituation they now are, there could have remained no hope of better days—in what cauſes theſe diſſenſions have originated—how they have been inflamed to their preſent deplorable and diſaſtrous extent—or in what manner

ner they can be cured, are topics I thank God wholly irrevelant to the preſent diſcuſſion. They are for the Legiſlature—all I know is this, that the ſooner they are corrected, the ſooner the Government will be reſpected by the country, and the ſooner it will be formidable to all its enemies. To ſay that theſe errors cannot be cured, that the hand which inflicted the wouud cannot be ſtretched forth to adminiſter the remedy, and enſure the cure, is moſt extravagant indeed—it argues ſuch an ignorance of human nature, and ſuch a lack of the knowledge of the hiſtory of mankind —not to be ſatisfied, that the moſt inveterate evils—and the moſt four and malignant prejudices might be made to bend before the exertions of a manly-minded legiſlature, that I own I can hardly think that arguments to the contrary deſerve to be treated with the mildneſs of rebuke. But inſtead of ſhunning enquiry, or running away from the review of the correction of theſe defects, (and great God, what government is free from fault) in the preſent ſituation of the world, if our legiſlature aſſumed a manly front and perſevering intrepidity, ſure I am that it never had ſo favourable an opportunity for binding up our frame of polity with our deareſt domeſtic ties, and giving both our conſtitution and our property a ſtability which they never before poſſeſſed. What is government, and what is there in the character of Iriſhmen, that ſhould fill a ſtrong ſteady government with fear, alarm, and apprehenſion,

in performing all the great duties of humanity.—Government, as it was once well defined by a great Engliſh orator, "is the ſeminary of the ſoul." We are all a ſet of children who muſt be managed, and it will ſeldom happen, that the pupil man, will not carry through life moſt of the properties of his great maſter, government. A captivating greatneſs of mind ſhould be its endearing and prepoſſeſſing characteriſtic. It ſhould aim at great ends by great means, protect the weak, relieve the oppreſſed, right the injured, but on no conſideration countenance injuſtice. By the over-ruling plenitude of its power it ſhould reſtrain the violent, and diſarm its enemies, as well by rigour when oppoſed to them in the field, as by an abhorrence of vice and a marked love of virtue. Indeed the natural effect of fidelity, clemency, kindneſs and protection in governors, is peace and amity, order and eſteem, on the part of the governed.

I muſt fairly, however, admit to the Unioniſts, all the heart-rending and melancholy truths adduced from the ſtate of the country, and brought in illuſtration of their arguments, though I muſt for ever contend, that the remedy which they propoſe for our national evils, is neither founded in long-ſighted wiſdom, nor conſiſtent with their ſpecious and querulous pretenſions to a ſtrong-nerved humanity. I have no wiſh to make the

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claims of any body of men on the juſtice of the legiſlature, a ſtalking-horſe to popularity. Whether I were diſpoſed to admit or deny all the accuſations brought, not againſt individuals indeed, but againſt *whole denominations and general deſcriptions of men* in this country, I can have no heſitation in thinking, that the man who ſits down deliberately to tear away every plaiſter which has been placed upon this bleeding ſtate, is equally deficient in wiſdom and humanity. It is quite alike to the community, whether this conduct proceeds from malignity or zeal. It is a temper which ought not to be encouraged, becauſe it is miſchievous. It would be happy for the repoſe of mankind, if thoſe who light up the flames of diſcord by their fury, were the only perſons who were to extinguiſh them with their blood.

Above the vileneſs of writing for any faction, or adopting from intereſt any opinion, having little to hope, and leſs to apprehend, from any miniſter, I muſt ſay, that let the Catholics of Ireland be as adverſe to our conſtitution, as our ſtatutes are hoſtile and injurious to them, let the accuſations which are made againſt them be juſt or unjuſt, founded or unfounded—Let their opinions and their inclinations be like or unlike thoſe of other men, various, fluctating, and contradicting, either they are or they are not ſubjects for further legiſlative indulgence. If no new occurrences

occurrences have pointed out the neceſſity of making the Catholics an efficient part of the phyſical and ſubſtantial ſupport of this iſland, both Proteſtant and Catholic muſt hope that time will allay diſſenſions, which anger has inflamed, and both will really conſult their common intereſt, by conſulting the principles of common ſenſe and common humanity, and both will alike look forward to ſome happy time, when all their diſſenſions, by ſome legiſlative proviſion would be buried in an eternal grave. A co-partnerſhip in great national misfortunes would be at beſt to the Catholics a miſerable exaltation: To diſtract the country, in looking for advantages when the queſtion was, Conſtitution, or no Conſtitution at all, would not only be fatal to their own intereſts, but to thoſe of the entire community. But if in the preſent claſh and jumble of nations, it is dangerous and impolitic to keep any deſcription of men in the boſom of a ſtate, writhing under the impreſſion of injuries, ought it not be the legiſlature of the country which ſhould take thoſe perſons under its immediate protection and benevolence, and intereſt them by the deareſt ties, in the preſervation of this ill-fated community.—Suppoſing the Catholics incorrigible enemies, or ſuppoſing them friends to the Conſtitution, any other conduct in the legiſlature would be unworthy the name and character of Iriſhmen. *If they are incorrigible enemies*

to

to the Conſtitution, any drunken invalid (ſaid Mr. Burke, in ſome one of his ſpeeches) is qualified to hoiſt the flag, and deliver up the keys of the fortreſs on his knees; but it is the part of a magnanimous general to defend his poſt of importance and of truſt to the very laſt, even againſt the moſt powerful enemy. If *like other men*, they entertain different ſhades of political opinion, the affairs of religion ſhould not diſturb the ſweet and endearing exerciſe of mutual friendſhips, and political intereſts ought not to poiſon and pervert the ſpirit of religion upon all ſides. But ſuppoſing a caſe which from no ſlight obſervation for ſome years on the general conduct of the Engliſh Adminiſtration, I think not very unlikely to occur, that in either event, Union or no Union, the Catholic claim would not influence the queſtion at all,—the inference is obvious.—If the admiſſion of the Catholics of Ireland into the Engliſh Government is now conceived perfectly compatible with the ſafety of the Engliſh Conſtitution, though many ingenious diſtinctions have been taken, and though many hair-ſplitting metaphyſicians have argued otherwiſe; yet I own I never yet have ſeen any fair logical inference, which founded on the danger of the ſtate, fairly demonſtrated the neceſſity of excluding them from a due participation of all the advantages in our mixed form of polity. So far, however, from conceiving that an Union can allay even the religious

gious diſſentions of this country, it requires no ſuperior diſcernment to foreſee, that it will neceſſarily conſiderably inflame the exiſting animoſities; and if it ſhould ſo happen, that political antipathies ſhould aſſume a more dreaded and determined character;—if all trade ſhould be comparatively diminiſhed, and all chance of an ameliorated condition be totally taken away, I cannot think that the perſon lays any great claim to a prophetic character, who ventures to predict ſome volcanic eruption, more furious than the worſt of thoſe which this diſtracted land has heretofore had the afflicting misfortune to encounter. I know full well, when I look into the boſom of my own family, when I take the range and ſurvey of my deareſt friends; or when I regard the honorable motives of many ineſtimable men who ſupport this meaſure, that there is a widely differing opinion as to the effect which an Union will have in ſecuring the country againſt the repetition of thoſe ſcenes which we have lately witneſſed. But truſt me, my countrymen, that the real danger to eſtabliſhed Government is leſs from its enemies than itſelf.—Look at the hiſtory of your own country,—look to the hiſtory of all nations and all times, and you will find that the iſſue of all revolutions is ſo uncertain, that the ſcenes that too often uſher them in, are ſo turbulent and ſo bloody, the prejudices on the ſide of ancient eſtabliſhments ſo great, and the intereſts involved

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in their ſupport ſo powerful, that while they provide in any tolerable meaſure for the happineſs of the people, they may bid defiance to all the efforts of their enemies. Looking, therefore, with the cloſeſt eye even at the worſt part of our picture, —our religious and political diſſentions, I can ſee nothing that ſhould ſeduce an honeſt mind, nor deter a manly legiſlator from adhering to the great protecting and preſiding which I have already laid down,—*cloſe connexion with England, through the medium of a reſident legiſlature invigorated and improved.*

Conſervative principle now tried by a review of the ſtate of Europe.

We are now arrived at that point of the argument, when it is neceſſary to try this principle by the relation in which we ſtand to our external enemies. Here poſſibly it might be ſufficient for the argument, to contraſt the preſent ſituation of France, with her ſituation when this queſtion was laſt agitated, and to infer that as the extent of her conqueſts, or her confidence in victory could not be ſo great now as they were then; therefore as we oppoſed the meaſure when ſhe was fluſhed and animated with ſucceſs, we ought not to be leſs diſpoſed to waver in our reſolution when ſhe has ſuſtained great comparative reverſes;—when ſhe appears likely to be torn to her very centre by internal commotions.

In an argument of this kind, that happy occurrence, a general peace cannot be a ſubject for any ſpeculation. We muſt ſuppoſe, therefore, a continuation

tinuation of the war, and when we ſuppoſe it, I entreat for one to be conſidered as not having the principles of humanity ſo blunted by all the heart-rending recitals of the devaſtation of our ſpecies, as not to pant with impatience for the happy termination of this vindictive conteſt. If the war is to be continued, our naval and military eſtabliſhments are in an unequaled ſtate of vigor and preparation. If great expences are required to ſupport thoſe eſtabliſhments, the monopoly of whatever trade there is, gives us a great comparative advantage over our enemies. Though the war, and the monopoly it gives, do not permit thoſe countries to derive any thing like the advantages from its continuation, which they muſt derive from a general peace. For one, my mind has never been accuſtomed to compoſing or chanting death ſongs over the fall of either of theſe great empires. They have both great means, great ſpirits, great courage, and great enthuſiaſm. If we look to the people of all claſſes and deſcriptions in England; if we turn our eyes at home, there appears no lack of zeal, no diſpoſition to forego making great ſacrifices, to maintain our iſlands chaſte and inviolate from the ravages of an invading enemy. But ſuppoſing the ſtrength or weakneſs of France can or cannot influence the queſton, if France is more powerful, Ireland and the empire never were more formidably prepared. If France is leſs powerful,

erful, the inference is obvious; there is leſs neceſſity (even ſuppoſing an Union to ſtrengthen the empire) for the meaſure. But for the purpoſe of argument, we will ſuppoſe as ſome fondly imagine, that Sieyes and Buonaparte are preparing the way for the introduction of a king: or as others who are diſpoſed to put a moſt favourable conſtruction on whatever happens in France ſuppoſe, that all factions are to terminate, all differences to ſubſide, and that the country is now to obtain a ſtrength, energy and power, to which, ſince the æra of the revolution, it had not before arrived. In the former caſe there would be leſs neceſſity for an Union; in the latter caſe Union cannot poſſibly ſtrengthen our connexion with England—it may weaken it. Of all things under heaven, my nature moſt recoils at the idea of any nation's repoſing in an invading army; or trucking and huxtering on ſubjects of domeſtic concern with an invading enemy. The principle of admitting a foreign power to interfere in what is properly of national concern, has never yet that I have known in hiſtory, worked well, but in a ſolitary inſtance; and thoſe who ſtudy the hiſtory of that time, will ſee at how many periods the advantages which were likely to be derived from it, were held by the moſt uncertain tenure. I think it an ungenerous and unmanly principle to entertain towards our country. All the advantages which have

ever been derived from it, have been narrow, feeble, uncertain, and precarious. But when I conſider the ſubject I am diſcuſſing, I muſt take human nature as I find it, influenced as it is in every clime and every age, by the faſhion, the folly, or the wickedneſs of the world.—As the apprehenſion that our enemies abroad co-operating with the diſcontented at home, is made a ground for the meaſure, it is incumbent on *me* to ſhew, that ſuch an argument can have no influence in determining the queſtion.—The ſafety of Ireland, Union or no Union, is eſſential to the exiſtence of Great Britain, and as I ever have and ever muſt conſider thoſe countries when they conſult their common intereſts partners in the ſame concern, ſiſters of the ſame houſe, and portions of the ſame Empire, demanding a reciprocal ſacrifice of partial accommodations to the common good, ſo I muſt be excuſed for thinking, that any protection extended by England to Ireland (particularly when that protection is ultimately for the preſervation of England herſelf,) does not entitle her to be requited by the ſurrender of every thing dear, ſacred and valuable to man. I love the two countries too well to balance their mutual favors to each other. But let it be recollected by thoſe who would ſupport an Union, as a grateful recompence for the gallant men who have been ſent over to defend this country, that Ireland has

marched

marched armies of men, and tranſported millions of money to ſupport England in every war, and that ſhe has looked for no requital for the ſacrifices ſhe has made—let it likewiſe be recollected, that the ſtrongeſt diſpoſition has been ſhewn to riſe in exertion, in proportion to all the difficulties with which the Empire has been threatened, when England has the good ſenſe to appreciate our friendſhip with tenderneſs and treat us with humanity.

Examining therefore the relation in which we ſtand towards our enemies, on manly and rational grounds, I ſee nothing for dejection. It is eaſy I admit to foreſee extreme caſes, to calculate on accidents, and to blazon out the pages of a newſpaper or a pamphlet, with what may happen.—To point to Breſt where ſo many ſhips of war are lying at their anchorage, and to add to this, that troops are daily embarking.—To ſtate that what happened before might happen again, and that if fifteen hundred men were landed before, 15,000 may be landed again, *therefore we ought to have an Union*. All I ſay is, that it is idle to ſuppoſe that an enemy would be received with greater warmth after an Union than before it. Therefore whether there is danger or no danger, I would rather animate the country than depreſs it. I would rather intereſt every man in the Conſtitution, than ſurrender the Conſtitution itſelf. I would fly to that ſtrong hold which every Government

vernment has, when it ſecures the affection of a nation by ſimilar privileges, equal protection, common intereſt, and kindred blood. Theſe are ties which though they "are ſaid to be as light as air, are as ſtrong as links of iron." The ſpeculatiſts in all countries are a mite in the hands of the reſt of the community. Depend on it, that legiſlature which proceeds on this principle will have itſelf ſurrounded with the real phyſical efficient force of the country, and, no power under Heaven will be able to tear it from its allegiance. Under all the circumſtances of Europe, I ſee no reaſon for deſerting the grand preſiding principle which I have laid down—*cloſe connexion with England, through the medium of a reſident Legiſlature invigorated and improved.*

Conſervative principle tried, with a view to the advantage of the Empire.

But thoſe whoſe minds have always heretofore been cramped and narrowed to a cabinet policy, now expand them to the conſideration of empire, and contend that this meaſure is eſſentially neceſſary to give it ſtability and ſecurity in its further operations. It is melancholy as well as ridiculous to obſerve the ſplendid panegyric which they make upon the meaſure, without an attempt to convince the reaſon, or enlighten the judgment. I have already ſhewn that an Union gives no encreaſed ſtrength whatever to Ireland, I muſt now ſhew that it is calculated to weaken even the Empire itſelf. What are the immediate advantages which it can confer on England? None except

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thoſe derived from encreaſed abſentees. When has Parliament been deficient in its zeal to ſupport any common cauſe in which the two countries have been engaged? Never. But Union, after the great expences which may be incurred, will enable the Britiſh Government to diminiſh the civil expenditure of this part of the incorporate kingdom; in other words, it will enable it to direct a conſiderable portion of that money at preſent ſpent in the civil government of Ireland to the advancement of the Empire. Wretched calculation! to ſubſtitute great national diſcontent for a paltry ſaving of this kind. It will enlarge the baſe of Britiſh taxation; if it does, it will weaken this part of the Empire—what makes this part of the Empire principally weak, its poverty. Wealth moſt frequently conſtitutes ſtrength—ſelf-intereſt operates moſt ſtrongly on the human mind; thoſe who are comfortable and affluent will not only bear with more froward humours in the ſtate, but will make greater ſacrifices and brave greater dangers, than the poorer orders of the community. If that part of the Empire is commonly leaſt vulnerable, that is moſt affluent, neither the encreaſe of abſentees, nor the extending the baſe of Britiſh taxation are calculated to render us more ſecure. Beſides encreaſed diſcontent is only to be counteracted by encreaſed force. Inſtead of Ireland being a profitable acceſſion to England, it may ſo happen,

that

that the revenue which could be raiſed in the country, would be little more than ſufficient for its internal defence. I believe in my conſcience that the principal reaſon why the late unhappy rebellion was ſo immediately ſuppreſſed, was becauſe the people of Ireland found that their condition was improving, even under the preſſure of war, and the calamitous appearance which the country aſſumed. If they had begun to taſte the ſweets of induſtry in 1762, and then had been gradually going back from 1782 to 1798, I think there would have been reaſon to apprehend a more formidable reſiſtance—encreaſed poverty begets encreaſed popular diſcontent—encreaſed popular diſcontent requires to be over-awed by encreaſed military ſtrength—encreaſed military ſtrength can only be kept on foot by a conſiderable augmentation of the national revenue. —So that calculating as I do on the depreſſion of this commercial country, and concluding that its diſcontent will be proportioned to its depreſſion, I cannot help thinking excluſive of the encreaſed danger ariſing out of the preſent appearance of the affairs of Europe, that even in a financial point of view, no great benefit can be derived from the meaſure to England; and certainly no advantage which can compenſate for any further alienation of eſteem and affection. In proportion as we diminiſh the means of the country, we not only prevent the further encreaſe of revenue, but we diminiſh theſe

funds

funds which are eſſential to diſcharging the intereſt of our preſent debt. The deficiency in the revenue, which will be occaſioned by the decline of our foreign trade, may poſſibly be made up by a ſweeping land-tax. What England loſes one way, ſhe will replace in another. When ſhe draws away the capital of Ireland, ſhe roots up all the ſeeds of our future greatneſs, and encreaſes our weakneſs. So that if ſhe gains one way, (by the emigration of great landed proprietors, and by extending the baſe of her taxation) ſhe loſes in another by excluding the poſſibility of our making ſuch advances as will enable us to bear greater burthens. She increaſes the neceſſity of keeping up a greater military eſtabliſhment. Local wealth ariſes out of local cauſes. Ireland, therefore, may certainly be ruined, though England herſelf in the great view of the queſtion cannot be materially ſerved. As to the argument which is ſtrongly urged in favour of this meaſure, namely, the preventing this country being in time to come, (what it is aſſumed, that it always has been,) an arena for factions, for maddened demagogues, and profligate politicians; I really think ſuch an argument, when made a part of an imperial queſtion, ludicrous indeed. All that can be ſaid in anſwer to ſuch an accuſation is, that no country under heaven is free from contending parties, when public diſcontents vent themſelves in the clamour of theſe parties, they

they ſubſide into a calm, it is only the confinement in the boſom which gives them a fierce and deadly tincture. But to make the patronage over this country, among other things, a further inducement for Britiſh factions to endeavour to raiſe themſelves to power, by their harangues and artifice, is only to increaſe an evil which already exiſts in that country, without ſuppreſſing or removing any of the baleful effects which ſuch an evil is calculated to extend to Ireland. It is to be remembered, that the legiſlature of Ireland is now dreſſed in the moſt *filthy dowlaſs*, for the very purpoſe of diſguſting the public at its continuation, and reconciling it to its eternal removal. Yet I do truſt, that to every man who hopes within the parental arms of this country to find a repoſe for the evening of life, her freedom will ſtill be dear. I do not deſpair but that the calm ſteady voice of reaſon will yet lull to ſilence the vain clamours of faction, huſh the rancourous hiſſings of envy, and unbar the avenues to returning juſtice. It is therefore, that even in the great view of advantage to the empire, I ſee no earthly reaſon which can induce a comprehenſive mind to abandon the great preſiding principle, to which I have been ſo often compelled to allude, *cloſe connexion with England, through the medium of a reſident legiſlature invigorated and improved.*

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If I have been right in thoſe commercial arguments which I have urged, if I have been correct in the view of the conſtitution which I have taken, and if I have been fortunate in ſo arduous a ſubject as that of examining our affairs at home, and viewing our relative ſituation with foreign powers, to have looked at them with manly firmneſs and independent intrepidity, God of heaven and of truth, what a compound of folly and of levity, are thoſe arguments which are buzzed about in ſupport of an Union! How admirably have the two houſes of parliament in England improved on every topic which was urged within or without the walls of our own! Indeed from the peruſal of all the ſpeeches delivered in theſe aſſemblies, far from imagining that the Engliſh members had waited to be inſtructed, by the introduction of Iriſhmen into the Britiſh parliament, in an art hitherto ſuppoſed to belong excluſively to the Iriſh themſelves, one would have ſuppoſed that it was only neceſſary that a connexion ſhould be formed in embryo, that thoſe gentlemen might be inſtantaneouſly inſtructed in this art, and enabled to diſplay to the world how qualified they were to improve it to the greateſt poſſible perfection. —It would in truth appear, as if theſe great ſtateſmen had ſent over their ſpeeches to Ireland, to prove to the wavering Unioniſts, the very peculiar ability with which they muſt neceſſarily rule an empire, when they could ſo ſoon ſurpaſs the Iriſh themſelves in that extraordinary accompliſh-

Abſurdities of Unioniſts ridiculed.

ment, of which they were heretofore reputed the moſt churliſh monopoliſts. Iriſhmen, ſays the worthy *Chancellor of the Exchequer of England*, the preſervation of the ineſtimable bleſſings of regular government and eſtabliſhed inſtitution, are in the actual ſituation of your country, precarious and inſecure; but an Union will perpetuate them, *by taking them away for ever.* Iriſhmen, ſays his worthy colleague, Mr. Dundas, you are very poor, very wretched, indeed; but an Union will make you rich like the Scotch, *by ſqueezing every guinea out of your Country.* Iriſhmen, ſays the *ſapient metaphyſician*, Mr. Wyndham, your manners are not ſoftened, your minds are unreclaimed, but an Union will remedy theſe evils, *by tearing away your Corinthian pillar of cultivated life, your ariſtocracy, and by cutting you off from all intercourſe with poliſhed ſociety.* Aye, ſays Mr. Canning, your conſtitution has been aſſailed, and was in danger of periſhing, but an Union will prevent its ever being again attacked, *by deſtroying it for ever.* And then ſays his *worthy helpmate, Lord Hawkeſbury*, we ſhall be able to march to Paris, our common ſtrength will be invigorated, an Union will remove all complaints, *by making the cauſe for complaint juſter than ever.* This is a very faint ſpecimen of the rapid improvement made by the members of the Britiſh Houſe of Commons. The advancement of the lords correſponds with their more elevated degree. Iriſhmen, ſays *Lord Auckland*, I was your ſecretary,

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I have been a kind of tutelary deity to your country; and though it is true that I ſucceeded very badly in uniting the Dutch againſt the common enemy, yet my capacity certainly extends to the Union of Empires. I have written various eſſays on your trade; and as I have clearly ſhewn, that you had no trade before 1782, and it has been rapidly increaſing ſince the æra of your independence, without at all injuring the trade of England, an Union will encreaſe that trade many fold, *by reducing you to nearly the ſame ſituation as when you had no trade whatever.* And then ſays the modern Solon, the lawgiver to the Corſicans, with a kind of rapturous exultation, ſee how ſweetly theſe beauteous countries embrace each other, and ſeem formed for one empire, *though we need only look from our windows to obſerve their careſſes interrupted by the moſt boiſterous ſeas.* Though (ſays he) you have neither fleets nor armies, can make no treaties, no captures by ſea or land, though you have no dominion over *Ceylon*, the *Cape of Good Hope*, *Martinique*, or *Minorca*, and though you are obviouſly a little ſubjugated dependency, yet an Union will give you more, and do more for you than my biennial parliaments or univerſal ſuffrage could do for Corſica; it will give you what you have not, and it will preſerve what you have *by taking away even to the right of framing your own laws.* And then ſays the luminous *Lord Grenville*, (who by the by ſent over his

his illuſtrious relative purpoſely to refreſh and improve the little ſtock of Iriſh knowledge which he had acquired during his viceroyſhip, that he might communicate his increaſed acquirements to his lordſhip)—then ſays the noble lord, ſumming up the debate—I ſee it my lords, I ſee it all—the conſtitution of Ireland is in the greateſt danger. And *he illuſtrates its weakneſs, by admitting, that it cruſhed a greater rebellion than that by which the Conſtitution of England was ever yet aſſailed.* The Noble Lord then proceeds to lament that ſome of the beſt blood and the greateſt talents in the country have caught the phrenzy of ſeparation—but contends that an Union will encreaſe in Ireland the number of the friends to Britiſh connexion, *by taking the men of the greateſt conſequence, and the beſt ſupporters of the Britiſh connexion out of the country.* We know, ſays the Noble Lord, that the Iriſh are very proud of their Independence, but an Union will madden them them with joy *by increaſing their humiliation*, and will remove every kind of hoſtility to England, *by making her in reality an enemy inſtead of a friend.*

Indeed this extraordinary and unprecedented quickneſs of acquirement on the part of the Engliſh members, proves to my humble capacity, how very unneceſſary it is, that the *good, honeſt, plain, country gentleman of Ireland*, ſhould be put

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to the trouble or the danger of being broken down on the rough roads of Wales, or obliged to deplore *when they arrived* in London, that they were drowned in the packet, or were *kilt* or *loſt* in the ſnow on *Penmanmoore*. This happy inſtance of Britiſh ſagacity, and this admirable diſplay of the comprehenſive mind of the Engliſh ſtateſman—which adds to its own ſtock of information and erudition in the courſe of one little week, what we *poor Iriſhmen* have been endeavouring to excel in, for theſe laſt 700 years, will certainly prevent the Union treaty being incumbered with any diſcuſſion on the numbers which are to be elected to the Imperial Parliament, or the manner in which they are to be returned. In the name of wonders, what can be expected even from the ſagacity and foreſight of our moſt *accompliſhed profeſſor* in this happy acquirement after the aſtoniſhing exhibition they have made. What purpoſe can it be to deprive us of the, feſtive pleaſure, and the convivial fellowſhip of thoſe, who though they hold places themſelves under the crown, " declare to God, Mr. Speaker, that they are wearied and ſick to death of the abuſes in the Iriſh Government, and ſtunned with the fooliſh prattle of the Independence of our Conſtitution; and who therefore hail an Union with joy, becauſe it will reform all abuſes in the Conſtitution, and make it really independent

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by burying it in an eternal grave! O rem ridiculam, Cato; et jocoſam!

Theſe ſpecious and plauſible abſurdities vaniſh before the ſtroke of reaſon and of truth. It would be well however if this extraordinary propenſity extended no farther. It is a continuation of the ſame temper which converts a majority *againſt* an Union addreſs to the crown, into a moſt triumphant majority *in favor of an* Union itſelf. It is thus that not only all the rules of common ſenſe, but all the old habits of miniſterial prudence, and miniſterial decency are abandoned *in this laudable exhibition of diſintereſted friendſhip for the happineſs of Ireland.* In Mr. Pitt's memorable Propoſitions, when he found he had but a trifling majority, he abandoned them altogether. Eighty majority in the Engliſh Parliament was too ſmall for this miniſter to go to war with Ruſſia:—how many bills have I ſeen abandoned as the oppoſition to them encreaſed, how many various and contradictory amendments to motions for peace have I heard made during the preſent war, by the miniſter himſelf to meet the ſentiment of the Engliſh nation. I ſtate theſe things as much to ſhew the happy influence which public opinion has on a *reſident Legiſlature*, as to ſhew the old habits of miniſterial decency to the people of England. But when an Union is propoſed to the Iriſh Parliament, it is rejected? It is propoſed to the Iriſh Nation, it is rejected?

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The miniſter is obſtinate; the nation unchanged in opinion. I do declare ſolemnly to God, under all the circumſtances of Europe, I ſee nothing which can ſave the Empire, but the calm, generous and magnanimous Independence of the Iriſh Houſe of Commons; feeling that our Conſtitution contains within itſelf the means of correcting both its principles and its practice; that we have inherited it from our fathers and ought to tranſmit it to our poſterity!

Gentlemen,

I have troubled you too long. It is high time to put an end to this deſultory addreſs, already I fear protracted to too great an extent. Which of your prejudices have I inſulted? What paſſions have I inflamed? Have I in thoſe times of national peril weakened your country, or traduced your Conſtitution by ſhewing the advantage of political juſtice. *Sine ſumma juſtitia rempublicam regi non poſſe*, was a ſentiment which I early learned from an accompliſhed Roman orator, not deficient in a knowledge of human nature, nor unacquainted with the management of ſtates. Have I ſet down with baſe factious views and a ſiniſter ambition, and maſked under dark, daſtard generalities, principles which I dare not openly avow? Have I breathed out my whole ſoul to you on this great queſtion, or have I carped at, and cavilled with a meaſure, becauſe

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it has emanated from thoſe who happen to be in power? Have I wearied you with arguments on the miſery and the miſchief which muſt reſult from this proceeding, without ſhewing you a ſafe and honourable cauſe which ought to be purſued? Have I taken up the queſtion with intemperance, and diſcuſſed it with malignity? Or have I ſhewn you that I am ſo ignorant of human nature, as not to be ſatisfied with deriving from the mingled frailties, and excellencies of men, thoſe effects which hitherto have not been produced by the influence of firm and ſteady virtue? No, Gentlemen, I abhor violence and impatience of contradiction—it only injures a good cauſe; it cannot ſerve a bad one—it originates in a radical defect of judgment, and too often terminates in an incorrigible intolerance of temper. I have re-conſidered the queſtion in the manner which I at leaſt have accuſtomed myſelf to think that every topic ought to be diſcuſſed, giving my adverſaries full credit for the purity of their intention, and ſtruggling with all the difficulties of my ſituation, and in doing ſo, I have not ruſhed upon the theatre of my country, yet covered with the blood of unnumbered multitudes, inflaming you to freſh diſturbances; no no, I have looked through the yawning chaſms of your ruin; as the honeſt mariner who after he has dropped a tear of unfeigned ſorrow over the numbers of his crew whom he has loſt, in the ſcowl-

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ing tempeſt, examines his veſſel finds that it has not been irretrievably wounded, trims his ſails, and ſteers forward to ſome haven of ſecurity. Our little country, from what motives or what cauſes I care not to examine, has lately occupied in the fore-ground of the melancholy picture which Europe has preſented, a place to which ſhe was not entitled by her importance nor her ſtrength. The melancholy conſequence of ſuch a proceeding has been, that ſhe has been repreſented bleeding at every pore, covered with mangled carcaſes, with villages flaming in every quarter, and writhing under all the ravages of devaſtating war. It is time that we ſhould begin to ſee all the horrors and calamities which ariſe out of doubtful and dangerous courſes. Harmony is creative—diſcord deſtructive. We have all injuries to balance—we have all paſſions to reſtrain—we have all froward humours to correct—we have particularities which require to be indulged.—After all the irkſome and vexatious wanderings of our nature, I would preſent to you the auſpicious Angel of the Conſtitution uſing its healing and meditorial ſpirit, inſpiring both governors and governed, by a ſenſe of common intereſt—common ſafety—and the feeling of common humanity, with an encreaſed love of their afflicted country.

Indeed, my addreſs to you is more in ſorrow than in anger, and therefore poſſibly a

greater ſubject for your regard. There are many topics on which I would have willingly treſpaſſed on your patience. In the few pages I have troubled you with, I have endeavoured to blend the two characters of moraliſt and politician; and in humble confidence I challenge the moſt rigid examination of the aſſertions which I have made, and the arguments which I have advanced. I ſee in this meaſure of Union not one benefit to be obtained, not one intereſt to be advanced, not one prejudice to be corrected, not one paſſion to be allayed, not one principle of conſervation and protection. If I did, I tell you honeſtly, I would have given it through every ſtage a warm and diſintereſted ſupport, however unpopular that conduct might have been. I am not ignorant how much the Britiſh adminiſtration hope to ſucceed in this project. I know full well that the meaſure is ſo popular in England, that not one diurnal print, however diſpoſed the editors and the proprietors of them may be to ſympathiſe in our misfortunes, and to recognize the deſtruction of Britiſh liberty in the meaſure, will venture to hazard more than ſome little ſqueamiſh, coqueting, exhilerating paragraph to their Engliſh readers, "that all the terms are agreed on, and that there is no doubt but that an Union will be carried into execution." I think, however, that from a long obſervation on the politicks of the men who compoſe the preſent adminiſtration,

miniſtration, that there never was a cabinet regulated in its opinions ſo much by "exiſting circumſtances," as the cabinet of the day. I do not mention this by way of reproach, rather the reverſe. When it is found that no exertions can make this meaſure popular in Ireland, depend upon it that it will be abandoned. No miniſter ever knew his men in the Houſe of Commons of England better than Mr. Pitt; and whatever character the ordinary reſolutions of that houſe for years paſt to Ireland might have been, I do in my conſcience believe, that a great majority of that houſe have deplored ſincerely the unhappy ſtate of Ireland for theſe ſome years paſt. I know that many were cheered conſiderably in 1795 and 1796, when it was neceſſary to buzz about, that ſomething would be done to quiet Ireland; and though it was conjectured then that an Union was in contemplation, and though the queſtion has been decided in England, yet ſure I am, that any meaſure repugnant to the feelings of the Iriſh nation would not be well received. Depend upon it that they will *prefer a real Union of intereſt and affection to any nominal intereſt whatever.* It is impoſſible that any meaſure could be more obnoxious to this community. I found my opinion, not on the expreſſion of general ſentiment, not on the muttering diſſatisfaction in the very perſons who ſupport it, not in the depreſſion of public credit, not in the ſuſpenſion of commercial enterpriſe, not in the deſtruction of private friendſhip, not in the

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unparalleled ſacriſices which have been made by ſeveral, not in the diſmiſſal of the beſt ſervants of the crown, not in village intrigue, not in the extraordinary favours conferred on the perſons who have enliſted in the ranks of the Iriſh ſecretary, not even on the conditional clauſes introduced into the new leaſes which are now made.—I found that opinion upon the very addreſſes themſelves, which have been preſented in ſupport of the meaſure. I do not ſay that they are not ſigned by honourable men—I do not ſay that any ſignatures have been extorted by fear—I do not ſay that any have been operated on by corrupt and ſecret influence—I know that the ſignatures from my own county are highly reſpectable indeed; but I'll make no reflections on the manner in which they were obtained. I ſay, that after the ſcenes which have deſolated Ireland, under the prevailing ſpirit of perſecution, and the conſequent reciprocal hatred of religious parties, that if Union could be conſidered to have any one thing in it likely to raiſe the languid and drooping head of public credit, to re-animate induſtry, and to put down all faction, that inſtead of a few ſolitary advertiſements haunting us day after day, for months together in the miniſterial papers in favour of the meaſure, the table of the Houſe of Commons would not be large enough to contain all the petitions which would be ſent up from every part of Ireland, praying that ſo happy a meaſure might inſtantaneouſly be adopted? I

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have ſeen too frequently indeed in both countries, for the purpoſe of the common good, miniſters and thoſe who *would* be miniſters play the game of faction, and fight for an addreſs for a particular purpoſe, with as much zeal as they would fight for that which was the object of the conteſt —power itſelf. But the plain unſophiſticated ſenſe of the nation always bore down this kind of ſpecious artifice. Whether it was followed, or whether it was rejected, is not a matter for our enquiry.—But the buſy and intemperate partizan was always loſt, in the expreſſion of the unſmothered ſentiments of the country. If there is any one thing under Heaven which ſhould endear you, (who ſee the ruin of your fortunes in the adoption of this meaſure) to the Legiſlature, it is the dignified hope—the manly ſilence which you have preſerved. You gave an opinion before,—you feel it unneceſſary to repeat it again. When did you give that opinion? Before you ſaw your country diſturbed? Certainly not. You gave it unneceſſary when your minds were ſo tremblingly alive to the horrors you had witneſſed, that the ſmalleſt alluſion to them was ſufficient to draw tears even from the moſt obdurate. When your ſcaffolds were yet reeking with the blood of innumerable offenders; when your fields were yet covered with the unburied bodies of ſlaughtered multitvdes, of all ages, of all claſſes and deſcriptions of political opinion, loyal and diſloyal, incorrigible

gible jacobins and temperate reformers, king's men and French partizans, enveloped in the dreadful indiſcriminating whirlwind of inſurrection, You gave it; under all the agony and diſtraction inſeparable from the remembrance of the loſs of your deareſt aſſociates, and the plunder of your moſt valued relatives. You gave it as I may ſay, when your metropolis was almoſt illumined, with the flames of ſurrounding villages, lighted up by fanaticiſm and thoſe vehement paſſions which are always ſure to ariſe in the boſom *even* of the beſt men by the reverberation of outrages. Abſent as I have been from among you for many years, you muſt pardon me if I have not a head to comprehend the utility of the little movements of party which I daily ſee, and if I have not a heart capable of being influenced in any reſpect by ſuch conſiderations. But as in the pelting of the tempeſt or the burſting of the hurricane the way-worn traveller, is filled with a pious rapture, when the gleam of ſunſhine plays upon his eye and makes the horizon glad, ſo in a ſeaſon of too general delinquency the generous heart which can emit a ſingle throb in the cauſe of humanity, will be inſpired with love and admiration for thoſe not totally callous to the claims of humanity. In this eventful year, every thing has not been as all we might wiſh it. I have not forgotten the ſeaſon when the preſent Viceroy arrived, nor have I been a totally indifferent obſerver

ſerver of the conduct he has purſued ; and I muſt ſay, that if I could view his conduct uninfluenced by, and abſtracted from the preſent queſtion ; if I could contemplate him by prudence and by wiſdom, perpetuating the calm which his manly but amiable moderation had diffuſed over this harraſſed and diſturbed land, I would have looked on him in no other light than an agent ſent, if I might uſe the figure, by heaven itſelf, to receive the effuſions of a nation's gratitude, and lay them at the judgment ſeat of the Almighty.

Gentlemen,

In the ſame temper that I eye the character of individuals, I can look upon the Conſtitution of your fathers, and your afflicted country—and acting upon a ſteady education and a ſettled principle, I cannot join in its reformation by its *ſubverſion* ; nor can I turn away from it with diſguſt, becauſe it lies wounded in every part, and ſcarce known by the moſt quick-ſighted of men. As to your country, it was your Conſtitution made it in a few years as powerful and happy as it was, and if that Conſtitution is annihilated your country will be a *joint tenant* with it in a *common grave*. The hurricane of human paſſion has ſwept over us—if we *look up* to that Conſtitution with firmneſs and integrity, truſt me, that we may *look down* on

on the follies and the crimes which desolate Europe with safety though not with complacency. Do not undervalue the resources of your country. Though civil war in a commercial country is almost an act of suicide; yet remember that there is a great excess of productive labour above your wants. If the *rebellion* has disturbed the collection of revenue, and has made it necessary to take a great part of your circulating capital, to replace the *fixed capital* which was so unhappily destroyed, remember that in twenty years, you have nearly compleated the foundation of an opulent nation. In the increase of buildings and machinery—in the improvement of the soil—in the fencing your little farms—in the opening new roads and canals and in extended trade and augmented capital.

My opinions are now before you on a subject which has deeply agitated my mind, and excited my feelings, and I hope I have shewn myself incapable of submitting my understanding to be cramped or narrowed by *factious views of any kind* or by *local interests*, if any there were to be advanced by this measure. When I took my pen to address you, every mean and bad propensity took immediate alarm. Rely on it said AVARICE you will be a looser by this conduct. You know not what injury it may do you said CAUTION; or what scrapes it may draw you into whispered COWARDICE. Depend upon it said DISCRETION

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it will be ſaid you were actuated by the moſt ſiniſter motives.

You can never after, cried HYPOCRISY, aloud be received with kindneſs by thoſe with whom you have ſo widely differed; nor be any thing, ſaid PRIDE, but a very contemptible fellow; nor riſe, quoth MEANNESS, in your profeſſion. But, like YORICK, when he offered half his chaiſe to the diſtreſſed lady; I have not liſtened to theſe cabals which were to no purpoſe but to encompaſs the heart with adamant. You are now in the full poſſeſſion of my genuine ſentiments on the ſtate of your country, I have been reared in the ſchool of political candour and moderation, and I hope I have made no unworthy uſe of the inſtructions which I there received. Indeed every event of the world, and every occurrence of the day have confirmed me more and more in an approbation of the principles of temper and moderation of every kind.

God of peace and love, look down upon this diſtracted land, and bid hatred, folly, madneſs, and murder ceaſe.

THE END.

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